IN THE ARABIAN DESERT

ALOIS MUSIL

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the Arabian desert,

Here is a fascinating picture of the borderlands of civilization, the story of strange customs and traditions, and the adventures that befell a hardy explorer. Alois Musil has wandered more widely over the Arabian deserts and knows their history, topography and folk lore more intimately than any other living man.

This one-volume edition of "In the Arabian Desert" is based upon the six-volume edition issued by the American Geographical Society in 1926-1928. Katharine McGiffert Wright has condensed her material from the six-voulme edition so as to bring the drama and color of the work within the range of the reader whose interest in travel and far-away places was captured by such books as Doughty's "Travels in Arabia Deserta," Lawrence's "Revolt in the Desert" and "The Life and Letters of Gertrude Bell of Arabia."

From the dawn of history, Northern Arabia and the interior of Mesopotamia have been borderlands of civilization. Here many a ruined city awaits the archeologist's spade and tape; many a Bedouin custom and tradition, the product of ceaseless conflict and adjustment between man and his desert environment, is as yet unrecorded. Broad tracts remain unseen by the Western eyes, and constant danger menaces the explorer.

"Among the explorers of Northern Arabia, Alois Musil holds a unique position, by reason of the extent, continuity, and thoroughness of his observations. . . To arrive at a better understanding of the reports about this region that have come down from antiquity; to throw some light on the part that Arabia has played in the broader history of civilization were the general objectives sought, and these could only be attained through a minute study of the country and people."—From the article on Musil's work in the **Geographical Review, April 1927.**

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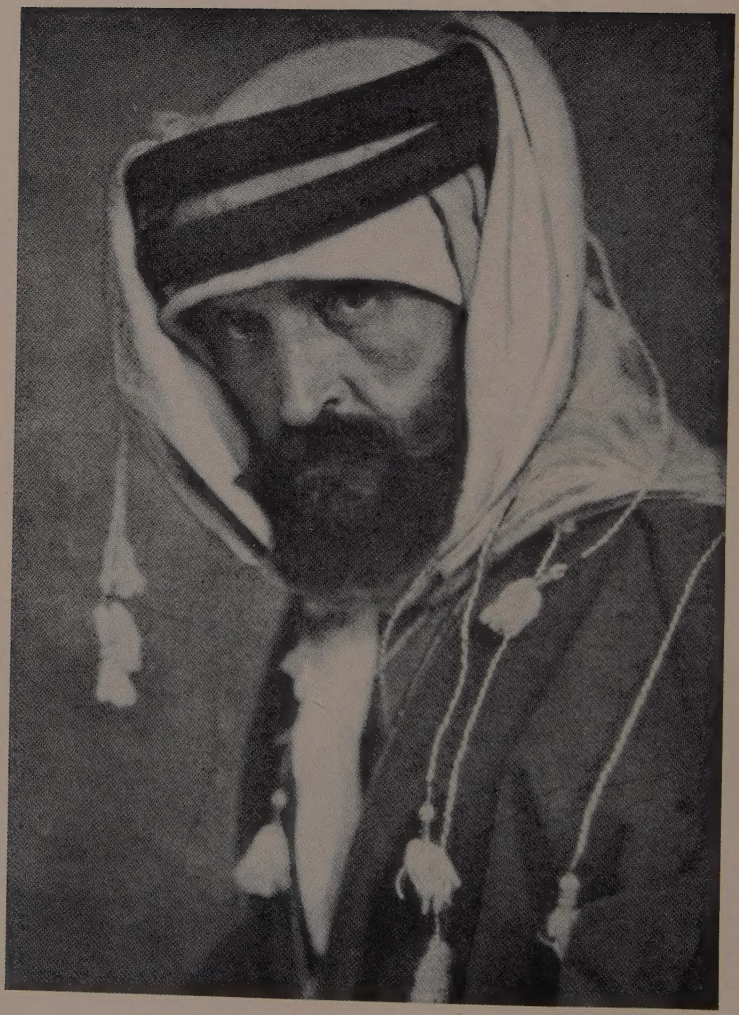
IN THE ARABIAN DESERT



"Sheikh Musa"

IN THE ARABIAN DESERT

BY

ALOIS MUSIL 1868–

See Geog. Rev. April 1927

ARRANGED FOR PUBLICATION BY

KATHARINE McGIFFERT WRIGHT

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

"Among the explorers of northern Arabia, Alois Musil, now Professor of Oriental Studies at Charles University, Prague, holds a unique position, by reason of the extent, continuity, and thoroughness of his observations. . . . To arrive at a better understanding of the reports about this region that have come down from antiquity: to gain some insight into the origin and evolution of monotheism, a concept which, perhaps, is peculiarly characteristic of the thought of desert folk: to throw some light on the part that Arabia has played in the broader history of civilization: these were the general objectives sought and they could be attained only through a minute study of the country and people." In these terms Musil's work is characterized in an article that appeared in the *Geographical Review* for April 1927.

The journeys described in the present volume formed but a part of far-flung wanderings in the deserts of Arabia between the years 1896 and 1915. Musil's earlier work in the Biblical lands of Moab and Edom, or the Arabia Petræa of the classical geographers, established his European reputation as an explorer of exceptional hardihood and courage and as a profound student of Bedouin life and of the ancient history of Arabic lands. In 1898 Musil made the sensational discovery of the "famous Quseyr Amra [or Castle of Amra: see below, p. 252] near the head of Wadi Sirhan." Between 1908 and 1915 he carried out far more extended explorations in the immense deserts between the Tigris and the settled

frontiers of Syria and southward into the Nejd. A detailed narrative of these explorations, accompanied by elaborate topographical and historical notes, has been published in five volumes by the American Geographical Society of New York, 1926-1928. A sixth volume of the same series, *The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins*, gives an exhaustive description of the ethnography and folklore of the most powerful Bedouin tribe of northern Arabia.

The present book is drawn mainly from Musil's *Arabia Deserta*, the second of the series, and from *The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins*. Here he gives a rounded picture of his experiences during two journeys made in 1908-09 and 1914-15. An account of his adventures immediately after we leave him at the end of this book, will be found in *Northern Negd*, the fifth of the series. Most of the topographical and historical material included in the longer work has been omitted. The war and the impact of modern civilization have brought many changes to Arabia. The camel is giving way to the motor car and the carbine to the machine gun. Musil's account is therefore doubly valuable as a last record of an age-old order that is passing, never to return.

The spelling of Arabic words follows in general that employed in Professor Musil's scientific series. Here, however, the spelling has been simplified and the confusing dots, curves and bows over letters—necessary for an adequate rendering of the unfamiliar Arabic sounds—have been omitted. As a consequence certain Arabic sounds are not here differentiated and those who wish to reconstruct the Arabic spellings should consult the scientific series. *Dh* stands for the sound of *th* in *this; zh* for that of *z* in *azure; gh* is a strong guttural. The vowels should

be pronounced much as in Italian. Be it noted, however, that the Arabs themselves do not always pronounce the same word consistently and that all the spellings are at best approximations.

To avoid monotony the article, which forms an integral part of many Arabic proper names, has been omitted except in compound names. *Al* before a proper name is not the article but the word for "clan" or "kin" and has much the same meaning as *beni* (tribe) or *eben* (son).

The poems, both in the Arabic and in literal translation, are to be found in *The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins*. For the sake of smoother reading the present renderings were made, but they do not differ radically from the literal versions. Casual rhyme and regular meter were employed here and there in view of the fact that the Arabic poems are in rhyme and meter. It was felt, however, that too rigid verse forms in general would destroy the folk spirit of the originals.

K. M. W.

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PART ONE

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SEPTEMBER 1908–JUNE 1909

I. INTO THE DESERT

MIGRATION TO THE DEKWA VOLCANO

"Nothing hinders you, Musa, from wandering in the vast desert before my countenance," said Nuri eben Shalan, head chief or emir of the Rwala tribe, on the occasion of my first visit to his tent in 1908.

His words filled me with such confidence that at the end of September 1908 I moved with my companions and supplies to his camp. This was situated near the settlement of Dmeyr, about thirty miles northeast of Damascus.

Bent as I was on carrying out as detailed a topographical survey of Arabia as possible, and on gaining some insight into Semitic contributions to our civilization and a better understanding of the people and country as a whole, it seemed as if I could do no better than to live the nomad life of the Bedouins as they lived it, clothed as they were clothed, eating what they ate, roaming where they roamed, gathering by the way such knowledge of their habits, customs, folklore and outlook as I could obtain.

I was greatly helped in this by my knowledge of their vernaculars and by the protection accorded me by the head chiefs of powerful tribes, whose friendship I had already taken pains to cultivate. It was particularly to "Prince" Nuri's friendship that I owed the success of these expeditions, as it was his influence that opened the way to many otherwise inaccessible routes. In view of the nomad's lawlessness this protection was a blessing indeed.

One European, Rudolf Thomasberger, whom for con-

venience we called Tuman, traveled with me to assist in cartographical work and to oversee my scientific instruments. The most important task of my native companions fell to Naser; it was his duty to guard the camels and supplies. Two others, Mhammad and Bleyhan, went with me on the scientific excursions that we took away from Nuri's camp: Mhammad as our cook, Bleyhan as protector against his fellow tribesmen. A fourth, Harran by name, helped to load and unload our supplies and pastured the seventeen camels. I had two tents. The larger one was oblong like those used by the Akeyl; there were stored our supplies and there lived my companions. In a smaller circular tent I slept and worked. In every camp both tents were pitched beside the tent of Prince Nuri, so that their very position indicated that I was his neighbor and protégé—traveling "before his countenance."

In the middle of November Nuri informed me that we should transfer our camp to the southwest of Palmyra. "We shall move," he said, "to the southwest of Tudmor [Palmyra] and there wait until the Angel of Allah drives the rain clouds above us and bids them pour out their water."

It seemed curious to me that Nuri should be so burdened with arms. He carried a dagger and an eight-barreled Gasser revolver, with its forty-eight rounds of ammunition; about one hundred and twenty Mannlicher cartridges were strapped across his shoulder, and his carbine was forever in his hand!

"Why this array in your own camp?" I asked him.

"Brother Musa, it's our habit. At war as we are with many a tribe I, chief of the Rwala and war leader of the Weld Ali and Shararat, must constantly be ready to

repel an attack. I myself must be doubly careful and alert, for I don't know when or where the avenger may surprise me. On your first visit to my tent you asked after the origin of some thirty holes in its walls. Not wanting to alarm you I concealed the truth. But this was it. On the night before your arrival avengers crawled up to my tent and shot at it. Allah was with me. I had not slept in my tent that night. The avengers are camping not far away with the Druses and may come to my tent again. They are thirsting for my blood. And yet, it was for the good of my family that I did what I did."—This he said in allusion to his brother and predecessor, Prince Fahad, who had been murdered by a slave at Nuri's own order, and to another brother, Mishal, whom he had killed with his own hand. He boasted of having personally killed in fights over one hundred and twenty men, this man with his sincere and childlike eyes! My friends in Damascus warned me against him, saying that no panther yearns after blood as much as he.

"Do not put your trust, Musa, in his countenance, his protection. He will take you with him into the desert and you will not return. He need not stain his hand with your blood, for there are slaves to execute his order. Many times you will be attacked and it will be by the will of Nuri. How easily a shot from behind could end your life. Nuri will lament and swear that his enemies have killed you. Don't trust him! Don't go with him into the inner desert!"

Yet I had confidence in him. His eyes attracted me.

The first thing in the morning I left with Tuman for a ruined Roman camp not far from ours. We worked under difficulties, for a violent, icy, northwest wind bent the tape measure and benumbed our fingers. No won-

der; the thermometer registered a minimum of 21° F.

Over and above the discomfort of this freezing temperature the high wind was raising almost opaque masses of dust and sand, the fine grains of which penetrated our skin and caused a most unpleasant tickling sensation. All the higher peaks to the north, west and south glistened in the enchanting beauty of freshly fallen snow. I would gladly have walked, but the Prince persuaded me that it was imperative to maintain my honor by riding.

"Musa, you have become a brother of mine and of Nawwaf," he said, "and thereby a sheikh of our tribe; and a sheikh may not go afoot to another camping ground but must ride at the head of his tribe."

We were riding among pack camels superintended by women and girls, either walking or sitting on the loads or in ornamented litters (Fig. 3). A beauty sang:

"Alas, the treachery of my lover, O Jude!
He has deceived me, O little sister of mine!
To-day no plea have I heard.
My desired one has deceived me!
I have sworn to return to him no more.
Hasten and bury me, even alive—O Jude!"

At the head of our tribe we found the sheikh Rsheyd eben Smeyr. He was about thirty years old, with a pleasant expression on his rather full face. He said he had persuaded Nuri to go south of the extinct volcano of Dekwa. This southern half of the volcanic territory of Iyath had not yet been visited by camels. I remarked that camping in the territory of enemies and grazing their best meadows and shrubs would test the valor of both chiefs.

Nuri confirmed my words. "By Allah," he said, "Musa

speaks the truth. The clans and tribes inhabiting the volcanic district are not decent enemies but malicious robbers who creep out of their dens, running away with their loot the moment they sight us. They have neither courage nor strength to oppose us and abandon even their booty just to crawl into their dens."

"Have you never ventured after them? Have you never sought them out in their cliffs?"

"Twice I have done so, but we lost so many mares, which were unused to the volcanic ground, that our loss exceeded the profit from the booty carried off."

Rsheyd added: "No Bedouin will wage war in the volcanic gullies. Only the open desert affords the possibility of a good fight."

Slowly we penetrated into a land that was hardly passable. It was covered with irregular stretches of lava and sand out of which protruded numerous black, pointed rocks, about ten yards high and a hundred to three hundred yards long. Most of them were split perpendicularly. Suddenly my beast fell headlong.

"It was only through the protection of Allah," cried Nuri, "that you saved your neck."

My frightened she-camel trembled and for a long time I could not compel her to rise.

Late in the afternoon the Prince rode ahead to find a suitable camping ground and presently, signaling me with the white sleeve of his shirt, pointed with his camel stick to the spot where I was to order my camel to kneel. There I was to pitch my tent. Hardly had he dismounted from his own animal when he was surrounded by the Arabs, all seeking favorable locations for their tents.

I unloaded my baggage, unsaddled my camel, and tying the rein to her left foreleg allowed her to graze

while I sat down by my saddle and awaited the arrival of my companions with the other camels. I was very tired and shivered frightfully from cold. I could eat nothing and was so violently shaken by chills that I put on all my blankets. The thermometer registered 20.3° F.

The next morning, although sick with cold and exhaustion and hardly able to stand, I had to get up, superintend the loading of the baggage, and plod ahead. Thank God! the chill wind calmed down and the sun grew appreciably warmer.

We started before noon. In an hour the Prince designated a new camping ground. All night long I writhed in pain and in the morning felt weaker than I had felt the evening before; but I managed to take some oaten soup.

NAWWAF ON WOMEN

That afternoon Nawwaf came to visit me and stayed far into the night. Again and again he inquired whether I was married and how many children I had; it was beyond his comprehension that a healthy man could remain single. He had had four wives already. Three of them had given birth to a son each, and yet he had divorced them all, one after another. The first one, whom he loved best, was the daughter of the assassinated Prince Fahad, his uncle.

"She deserted me because she was more attached to her own family than to me, her husband, and to Sultan, her son. The second, daughter of the deceased Prince Sattam, became repugnant to me. I dismissed her from my tent although she wept bitterly and begged me to keep her. The third, a famous beauty and daughter of a minor chief,

had to return to her family because I tired of her. My fourth wife, Fhede, has lived in my tent two years and as yet has borne me no child."

"I don't understand, brother, how you can act so frivolously and destroy the happiness of Allah's creatures, of your wives as well as of your sons."

Nawwaf laughed and said: "It is our custom and our habit. How could the son of a prince be satisfied with one wife? What would the warriors say?"

"What happens to the sons of your dismissed wives?"

"For some time they remain with their mothers. Then they come to my tent where my old mother rears them as she is rearing my first-born son, Sultan."

"Poor children, poor mothers, that they have to live apart! The women of my land fare much better. With us a husband cannot put a wife away without sufficient cause, simply saying, 'You have become repugnant to me' or 'I have grown tired of you. Return to your family.'"

"True," retorted he, "but I pity your men. If one of them finds after a year or two that he does not love his wife and yet is forced to live with her all his life, how unhappy he is! Such a burden we could not accept."

"You refuse such a burden and yet you put it on the shoulders of your women. You claim freedom but deny it to them. Yet both men and women are Allah's creatures and children of Adam; both have the same rights and the same duties."

"That isn't true, Musa. Don't be angry that I contradict you, but you are mistaken in thinking that Allah gave the same rights and the same duties to the women as to the men. Look now, brother Musa, when the enemy appears and the sound of the battle cry arises, is it the

women who rush to the defense? Is it the women who undertake aggressive raids? Is it the women who return with booty? We keep women to bear us children and to care for our tents. We do not oppress them, yet a woman must always be conscious of the fact that man is her master. Thus Allah has willed; our ancestors observed this order; likewise we observe it. It is our habit, our custom, our law."

"Yet at times your women are braver than you," I replied. "When you men flee from the enemy it is the women who by words and gestures urge you—no, force you—to offer resistance; and many of your women can wield a weapon as well as you."

"Those are the exceptions. The women remind us by their words and gestures of our love, and they promise us a reward. Unwilling to be humiliated by the enemy, we muster up fresh resistance and fight for the women's sake; but the women have never yet saved us from the enemy."

"And, pray, could not a woman be your chief? Do you not esteem Turkiyye, the widow of Sattam, more highly than many a chief? Why do you call her children the descendants of Turkiyye; why do you not call them the descendants of Sattam?"

"Turkiyye surpasses by the virtue of her intelligence and calm deliberation. We consult her, but I do not think we would subject ourselves to her were she our chief."

"How about Aliya, who led not only the Beni Sakhr but also your warriors against the troops of Ibrahim Pasha? She was a woman and you obeyed her."

"That was a long time ago."

"It was not so very long ago. Contemporaries of Aliya are still living."

"That was the will of Allah. On that occasion He took

from the Arabs a prudent man and substituted a woman, but to-day we should permit no woman to command us. When I last visited Damascus I learned that the Sultan had granted liberty to his subjects; from then on, so they said, women and slaves would be the equals of free Arabs. On hearing that I declared: 'But with us in the desert it will not be so. You settlers may do as you like among yourselves, but do not try to force your freedom upon us in the desert.' "

ATTACK OF THE DRUSES

The air was very cold, but I was able to sleep all night and the rest gave me strength. Shortly before noon next day while I was in my tent trying to work, I caught the sound of an agitated cry: "Ho! riders!" Hurrying out, I saw the women and girls running toward the mares, saddling them, and bringing them forward to their husbands and brothers who threw off their heavy sheepskin coats, fastened on their cartridge belts, and seized their rifles. In less than two minutes the armed warriors were riding off toward the south to repulse an unknown enemy. A youth riding by my tent sang:

> "Our gracious Lord! Behold, O Lord!
> Thou wilt pour forth a copious rain abroad.
> We shall spread out a feast for the birds of prey
> Before our she-camels' eyes this day."

Songs like this were heard on all sides. The warriors were gathering courage for the ensuing fight. Which of them would return?

Everyone in the camp remained peaceful and calm; no woman cried, no elder offered advice. A few men, left

to defend the camp, ascended a cliff to the south with rifles, and I stumbled after them in the hope that I might be able to watch the fray through binoculars. I saw our fighters divide into two bands, the stronger with the Prince at its head galloping to the south, the weaker led by Nawwaf to the southwest. Both soon disappeared behind a high wall of rocks and we could see them no longer.

In the afternoon three men on horseback came with the news that there had appeared in the morning to the south of the camp a band of Druses and their tributaries, goat and sheep raisers, who had attacked the herds of Eben Mejwel. The raiders had driven off one herd numbering over seventy camels, but when the alarm had been relayed rapidly to the camp by guardsmen in the hills and the Prince's troop rushed out, they abandoned the booty and fled.

Nuri's son, Saud, was sternly rebuked for not guarding the flocks more diligently.

"But I assumed, father, that now when it was so cold the Druses would not leave their warm dwellings and the members of other clans would remain in their gullies."

Nuri interrupted his apology: "Be silent and don't blacken my countenance. A Bedouin depends on neither cold nor heat; he never trusts his enemy but confides solely in himself and his weapon."

The next day we again changed our camp. The tents were struck and loaded and all the inhabitants and camels were soon plodding along to the south-southeast.

I had planned to ascend the volcano of Dekwa to draw a map of the vicinity; but, alas, the air was not so clear as it had been for the past few days, for fine mists giving a trace of warmth were spreading out from east to west. I was at first overcome by such weakness that everything

about me seemed to move in circles and I had to hold tight to my saddle to keep from falling. Our way led over the countless sharp edges and smooth planes of lava crags, and my she-camel had to be constantly on the alert to avoid the dangerous places (Fig. 1). At the height of 2750 feet we entrusted our camels to a slave named Abdallah, and with Tuman and Bleyhan I continued to the peak. Climbing cautiously along the southern edge of a covered crater for a full half hour, we finally reached the top and set to work.

Dekwa, rising to a height of about 3330 feet, is the highest volcano of the Iyath territory. To the east, north and south are black masses of lava, over which loom many solitary volcanic cones. The view is depressing.

A LOVE MARRIAGE

After we returned to the camp we heard that the enemy had again appeared in the east but had fled before they came within shooting distance.

Toward evening Nawwaf visited me. As we were chatting together I told him I had just learned from the negro Abdallah that my servants were in the habit of asking his assistance in every service which it was their own duty to perform, that indeed Nawwaf had to do their thinking and acting for them. When I reproached him for not having called my attention to this laziness, he smiled and retorted that a brother must help his brother.

"If I need assistance, brother, I will send my companion with this camel stick which you gave me, as a sign that I am aware of his appeal, since a written request would be of no use."

"True, Musa, I can write with my spear and make periods with my bullets, but I cannot use the reed pen nor do I know how to read. My son Sultan, however, will learn to write and to read if Allah will but grant him life."

"And now I beg you, brother Nawwaf, to lend my people two or three camels to carry my loads whenever we change our camp or when I happen to be going on an expedition."

"My property, Musa, is your property and yours is mine. I will send three camels to lessen the burden of your others. With your own seventeen camels those will suffice."

We continued to chat together and then Nawwaf told me something of the history and relationship of the Bedouin tribes. It seems that the Rwala under Nuri exercise control over the whole Aneze group known as Zana Muslim.

After talking some time Nawwaf waxed eloquent upon the heroic qualities of his grandfather Hazza. "But," he said, "still a greater distinction was attained by his nephew Sattam. Sattam made a love marriage with Turkiyye of the house of Eben Mheyd, from time immemorial bitter enemies of the Rwala and from whom the head chief of the Fedan is descended. Once Sattam led our warriors on a raid against the Fedan: he pressed the defenders back to the tents and saw for the first time the white Turkiyye who, with her breast bare and her hair loosened, was encouraging her fellow tribesmen to the utmost resistance. Sattam won the victory, drove the Fedan warriors far behind the camp, but forbade his people to pull down the tents or to plunder them.

" 'Turkiyye, inform your father and the warriors that Sattam gives all the tents to you,' exclaimed Sattam and disappeared from the camp.

"This chivalrous deed so pleased Turkiyye that she refused to marry anybody else and persuaded her father to allow her to marry Sattam. You know her, as well as her sons, Khaled and Mamduh.

"After Hazza's rule Sattam became head chief and commanded the whole Zana Muslim division for over twenty-five years. He derived great help from his wife Turkiyye whom he esteemed and always kept near him. Fahad was recognized as Sattam's successor by the Rwala, who, however, were not true to him long because he was greedy and suspicious. Allah sent on him what he deserved and thus Nuri, father of your brother Nawwaf who relates all this to you, has become head chief of all the Rwala."

✧ ✧

LIFE IN THE CAMP

In the morning our camels were driven to the Lake of the Ateybe where the rivers end that irrigate the gardens of Damascus. The camels had to be watered and the herdsmen were to bring water for the next seven days. We had about three quarts but there was not a drop in the other tents. It was fortunate that the cold air caused no thirst. We prepared neither tea nor coffee but baked a hare which Nuri had presented to us. His hunter had killed two.

Behind my tent little boys were practicing with slings. They had gathered a quantity of round pebbles and were throwing them with wonderful precision at the edge of the cliff thirty to forty paces distant. The pebbles whistled through the air and, falling on the ledge, rebounded and flew several feet farther. A pebble released from an Arab sling will fracture the thickest skull. I thought of the young herdsman David who met in a duel the warrior

Goliath with a sling as his only weapon. He had had just such practice as this in throwing pebbles.

The evening and night were unusually peaceful. There were no cries or curses of herdsmen to break the stillness, no growls, roars or gruntings of camels, for the herds were passing the night near water and would not return till the following evening.

As I was convalescing but slowly from my recent illness, which had weakened me considerably, I devoted the days to folklore studies. All day long I gathered notes on the manners and customs of the Rwala, jotted down their poems and ditties and searched after phrases explaining various words used in their dialect.

But with what anguish was it accomplished! From sunrise to sunset I sat in my round tent with an informant recommended by the Prince. All the flaps were closed lest he be distracted by looking about him.

With his kerchief pulled over his chin and half of his nose to insure himself against my scent—for only Allah knew whether it was harmful—and resting his left hand on a camel saddle, he would draw pictures lazily in the sand with a camel stick, oblivious of me. After what seemed like a doze, he would start, draw his eyebrows together and gaze with longing at the exit of my tent. But still he must endure the torment of my questions! It was the Prince's wish, and after this torture he would have earned sweet tea, coffee, a good supper, and perhaps some money, too.

Suddenly he would babble along like a brook, all animation; then as suddenly he would come to a dead stop, a sentence lopped clean in two. If I asked him to explain some neat phrase he had used he would assure me that he had forgotten it, that it had disappeared from his head, that he had never heard it.

Witless indeed, he seemed then. But alas, the real torture was ahead. Every word I had jotted down, and now he must repeat, explain, and supplement. It was too severe a mental strain for him. Denying, hedging, contradicting, he worried along, leaving me at the end no less tired than he.

Yet I must seem delighted with his confidences, leading him on like a spoiled child, and thank him profusely at the end. For did I not need him the next day and the next, or another like him?

Wednesday night thieves appeared in the camp. The guards observed three of them and fired ten shots. All went wild. In the morning nine camels were gone. At the order of the Prince the guard was increased. The Bedouins obeyed although they had no great mind to do so. The thermometer was dropping below freezing point at night and the guard could not be clad heavily. As the watchmen feared they might fall asleep, they kept singing and yelling at each other so boisterously that not a soul of us could sleep quietly. Arabs do not sleep long at night but sit until after midnight at fires; usually they lie down when the morning star appears and remain in their beds until almost noon. The afternoon is spent in visiting.

Saturday morning, November 28, the entire landscape was covered with frost. A strong west wind caused us a great deal of work as all the tents had to be fastened anew, ropes doubled, and pegs driven deeper and braced.

WIND IN THE DESERT

THAT night the violence of the wind kept us awake. The slaves of the Prince had to hold down his tent the whole

night through and the high litters of the women were carried out in front of the tents lest they be damaged when the heavy roofs plunged about under the lash of the gale. My round tent stood the test well, though several times during the night we had to tighten the ropes and incline the central pole toward the wind; but the oblong tent, set up with its flank to the wind, had to be struck and laid upon the baggage. The men crawled under it, nestled among the baggage, and waited for the dawn.

The wind blew with increasing fury all Sunday, driving before it huge clouds of sand. Upon my belongings in the round tent it deposited a coat of white sand from one to two inches deep, although the tent was closed and stuffed both without and within. The sand was driven along with a peculiar tinkling sound, as if countless metallic leaflets were striking against one another, and it got into everything not hermetically sealed.

The Bedouins pitched their tents with the long walls against the wind. These could have withstood the wind alone, but as the sand piled up in drifts against the walls the strain was too great and the pegs gave way. At last the Arabs had to lift the lower portion of the tent walls to afford a free passage to the sand and wind, but this made it impossible to kindle the fires. No one would leave his tent; even the camels would not go to graze. They knelt, with heads turned toward the east, the west wind wailing over them, the drifting sand half covering them, immobile, desert statues. It was not until nearly noon that they could be driven, protesting, to pasture, with Harran constantly urging them in front and Bleyhan driving them from behind. Not grazing itself could tempt them in this dismal weather.

Toward evening the wind ceased and with it the whirl-

FIG. 1

My camel at the foot of the Dekwa volcano

ing sand. A slight rain began to fall. That night I was suddenly awakened by a cold liquid spilling over my head and chest. It was raining into the tent.

On Monday morning the view of the surrounding hills was glorious. All the elevations rising above the horizon were covered with a snowy mantle which glistened in the rays of the rising sun like myriads of flashing jewels. Even our last camping ground at Dmeyr was covered with snow; soon, however, the sun disappeared and it started again to sprinkle. Toward noon hailstones of considerable size began to fall and covered the ground to a depth of an inch and more.

In the afternoon Nawwaf asked me to go with him to visit his white slave Damman, one of a large family whose members had from early times been slaves of the Prince's forebears. Damman and his kin were the only white slaves in the entire tribe, for it had not been feasible during the last century to buy a white slave. Black ones, however, are still being bought by traders from Mecca and Medina for sixty to one hundred *mejidiyyat* ($54 to $90).

Damman had a gunshot wound about two years old in the calf of his right leg. The ball had penetrated all the way through the flesh but in time the wound had seemed to heal. After a year, however, the leg became swollen and extremely painful, and although Damman's relatives cauterized it with red-hot iron, it gave him no relief. Finally they cut it open: whereupon a quantity of blood flowed out, the swelling vanished, and the leg healed again; but about twenty days before I was called upon to cure it swelling had set in again, and now poor Damman was unable to stir. The sky was cloudy so no danger threatened from the light of the stars. Damman, therefore, lay in an open tent, covered only with a shirt and with both

nostrils stuffed to protect himself from the harmful influence of the emanations and scents of his visitors. His wife implored me to help him, promising to carry out my orders faithfully. I gave her the necessary medicines and showed her how to apply them.

The first of December looked in the desert just as it sometimes does at home: heavy frost covered everything—tents, ropes, perennial plants—and clouds of dense mist hung in the sky. The frost-covered sand and dry stalks crunched under my feet. The thermometer registered 43° F., and a damp, raw wind pierced our clothing and coverings. The tent walls were very thin, the ground was cold, and we were unable to build good fires because the camel dung and other fuel were so damp. As if this were not enough, a thick smoke was rising from the fire, painful to eyes and lungs.

The Bedouins lay about, huddled like porcupines in their sheepskin coats and mantles, with knees drawn up to their chins. They would not move even when called. The mist became so dense that Tuman, who had wandered some thirty paces away, could not find the tent again. I sent out my fellows to fetch him back.

Snow fell in the entire vicinity.

II. TO THE BORDERS OF THE EUPHRATES

BEFORE THE EXCURSION

On Thursday evening, December 3, the clouds disappeared, the air was clear, the moon was shining, and there was no sign of the longed-for rain. I decided to make an excursion through the desert to the Euphrates. Bleyhan advised me to start at once before the steady rains set in.

The Prince promised me a letter of introduction to the head chief Fahad and his son Meteb of the Eben Hadhdhal kin of the Amarat tribe.

"Why, you and they are enemies!" I exclaimed.

"Yes, Musa! We, as the chiefs of our tribes, are enemies, but as men we're the best of friends. And, by your life, I tell you that I love Meteb as I love my sons, for he is a gallant, noble, and sincere man, and, by Allah, I speak the truth."

"Still you would attack him, perhaps even kill him?"

"At the head of my warriors I spare no one."

Then he ordered his scribe to write letters at once to Fahad and Meteb. I should have liked to leave that very day but the Prince opposed the plan, pointing out to me the necessity of having a guide. He himself wished to provide one. He named the negro Ambar who was born in the Amarat tribe.

"Do not take Ambar with you, Musa," advised Nawwaf. "He is conceited and would be more troublesome

than useful. Trust in Allah's protection and start on your journey at the favorable omen."

Bleyhan went with a camel for water to a volcano not far away where several rocky crevices had been filled by rain; the rest of the men prepared provisions to take with us. I reckoned that the trip would last fifteen or at the most twenty days, but when Nawwaf came he urged me to carry provisions for twenty-five or thirty days. This we could not do, as we did not wish to overburden our beasts.

Bleyhan was delighted that he was to accompany me with Tuman and Mhammad, while Naser and the herdsman were to be left to guard the tent, provisions, and camels. I had dismissed my former herdsman, Harran, because he was lazy, and engaged a better herdsman, a member of the Shararat tribe of the name of Mufazzi, an orphan, still single, who had nothing and was eager to earn something by serving us. When he came with his younger brother to arrange an agreement, I offered him food, the necessary garments, and four *mejidiyyat* ($3.60) monthly on condition that he perform his duties faithfully. Mufazzi accepted the offer gladly, for the Bedouins pay their herdsmen only one *mejidiyye* a month and, if they starve, their herdsmen starve too.

Toward evening Nawwaf came to take me again to his white slave, Damman, who was writhing in pain. On examining his right leg and finding a good deal of pus in the swelling, I lanced the sore and released all the accumulation to his great relief. I gave his wife the necessary medicines for the following days and asked her to take good care of him. She promised it with her eyes full of tears and said:

"How could I do otherwise than take care of Damman, when my soul is in him and his soul is in me?"

Damman's brother prepared us coffee according to Naw-

waf's liking. He roasted the coffee beans till they began to turn a rose brown; while they were still hot he pounded them in a mortar to a fine powder, boiled it quickly, and added seven spices. Nawwaf himself poured me the first cup and, when I praised it, drank the coffee, smoked from a smoking pipe, and invited Damman's brother to recite his favorite poem. The slave placed his *rebaba* (rebeck, a musical instrument not unlike our violin) on his knees, held it with his left hand, with his right drew the fiddle-stick, and recited:

"O merry youth! Fill the damaged pipe for us,
Fill with tobacco from Ghowr and give it here:
Far dearer to me than the kisses of full-hipped maid
Is that little bone that banishes sleep in the night.
Fill the pot where cardamom and nutmeg
And twenty fragrant stalks in their just measure are laid.
Bring a fat sheep and put in the steaming caldron,
A garmented sheep, garnished with mouthfuls of grain.
Then with fat will glisten the beards of grave men,
Who have freed the laden camels taken in thick of the fight.
My comrades can parry well, no blows they feign.
How many have lost their heads through doughty deeds!
No butter vendors, these, to consult old women's lore,
Not only on carnal joys do these set store.
O Lord, who even for Druses quickens the seeds,
Leave not to the world only copper, the silver Thine!

How many a calumny treasured in the heart
Will vanish, that yet too long as truth had left its smart."

IN THE LAVA TERRITORY

On Saturday, December 5, the ground was frozen hard and covered with a thin layer of frost when we saddled

our camels and loaded the baggage. The Prince came to me, gave me all sorts of advice, and told Naser to sew up all the provision bags and not to open any during my absence.

"I shall behead you, Naser, should I find a single one open. Remember that I am responsible for the property of Musa."

Having finally loaded my small circular tent, we started out eastward. Each of us rode a camel, and Bleyhan led also a fifth camel which carried the water saddle and the water bags. As the nearest water was ninety miles distant, we took with us enough for three or four days. We wound our way between the volcanoes, avoiding the sharp black crests and peaks protruding from the ground, and encircling elliptical basins surrounded by high lava walls and cliffs. A fox ran across the path. Bleyhan greeted it with glee, called it, and, when told not to mind the fox but rather to look for hares since we needed fresh meat, he replied:

"A single fox is better than ten hares, because it ensures the happy outcome of our journey. Allah has sent us a fox at the start of our journey as a sign that nothing ill will befall us, that we shall return in health." This confident prediction filled us with such joy that we urged our camels to a faster pace.

We cooked our supper in a depression surrounded by lava but we could not pass the night there, for the smoke from our fire would have betrayed us, lodged as we were between two enemies. North of us camped the Freje and Fleta clans; to the south were hiding the Ahali al-Jebel, their bitterest enemies, who were notorious for their cruelty. Sneaking about, especially at night, they would attack lone travelers, murder them, and escape with the

spoils. How easily they could have attacked and robbed us! Therefore by Bleyhan's advice we observed the utmost caution, keeping our carbines loaded and within constant reach.

After supper we proceeded in a northeasterly direction. It was a very exciting journey. Holding the loaded carbines on the forward part of our saddles, straining our eyes and ears not to miss the least suspicious sign, we were constantly apprehensive of enemies and their bullets whenever we made a turn around a cliff or lava ledge. Added to this the night was bitterly cold, with an icy west wind penetrating to the marrow. Finally, unable to stay in the saddle any longer, we took refuge near a volcanic cone, behind a few basalt bowlders under a dark cliff, where we fastened our camels and lay down on the frozen ground.

In the morning we mounted our beasts and rode to the southeast until in a small hollow we found fresh perennials and dry grasses, upon which our camels grazed. We prepared hot coffee.

An hour later we passed the last volcano of a large group. West of that point black cliffs stretch to the southeast and the landscape presents a new aspect. The lava forms low, narrow ridges, between which extend flat valleys where rain water collects in large and small pools. Carved on the larger lava bowlders we noted tribal signs and the images of various animals.

TWICE ATTACKED

EXPECTING to discover some writing also, I was scrutinizing the rocks when suddenly I heard a shrill war whoop and saw six, ten, twelve riders charging us from their

hiding place behind a pile of lava in the valley. There could be no thought of defense. They seized the reins of our camels, forced them to kneel, and jerked us off the saddles. I was stunned by a blow from the butt of a carbine and, before regaining consciousness, was stripped naked. The same thing happened to my companions. Bleyhan offered resistance and was seized by two men who regarded him and his camel as their booty. With drawn daggers they urged him to tell where the gold was and, getting no answer, beat him in the face with the handles of their daggers until he bled. One of the three marauders who had captured me put the point of his knife on my chest and, pressing it deeper, savagely demanded my gold; when I refused to answer and struggled to get free, the second one struck me with his fist in the face until blood sputtered out of my mouth and nose.

They robbed us of everything we had and then divided the spoils. They put on our clothes, loaded our bags and baggage upon our camels, and drove them off to the east, ignoring us entirely. Shivering with cold, we hurried after them.

This was perhaps the most wretched hour of my life. I had been wounded and robbed, and this at the very start of my explorations, before I had penetrated the unknown desert that for so many years had lured me . . . I could not and wished not to think of the future.

Presently Bleyhan whispered to me that these robbers belonged to the Fedan tribe, for he recognized two of them. Knowing that the Fedan venture on horseback into these remote places only in the company of many camel riders, and therefore surmising that these horsemen were merely the vanguard of the main body, I wanted to follow them until they met their leader, that I might ask him to

return what his men had stolen. Soon after we started after them Mhammad ran up to tell me that the robber who took away his things belonged to the Ebede tribe, for he had seen him at the chief Barjas' tent. At this news the first star of hope flickered in me. The Ebedi knew that I had formed a friendship with his chief Barjas and that therefore it was his duty to protect me; otherwise he would blacken the face of his chief and be expelled from the tribe. So I called to him:

"O Ebedi, mind that I am before your face, under your protection, and you shall answer before your chief Barjas eben Hdeyb for all that has befallen me and yet shall befall me."

The Ebedi stopped, extended his hand to me, and proclaimed to the rest that we were the protégés of his chief and that it would be necessary to return to us all they had appropriated. Then Bleyhan joined in, reminding the Ebedi that the Ebede and Kmusa were kinsmen, that he belonged to the Mesreb clan of the Kmusa and was accompanying us with the knowledge and consent of his head chief Ghathwan eben Mershed, to whose protection we were thus entitled. In the name of his head chief, he requested them to restore our property. At this the Ebedi promptly returned to Mhammad all he had taken away from him; but the eleven fighters of the Fedan sneered and declared that nobody should snatch from them a booty sent by Allah.

About a quarter of an hour later the Fedan suddenly gave a shrill whoop which brought some twenty-five horsemen galloping towards us. At my request to speak to the commander of this cavalcade the latter came up to see what I wanted; whereupon I explained under whose protection I was traveling and informed him that he would be

held responsible for everything that had befallen us should he not immediately help us regain our property. He proved to be Hawwash eben Ghafel of the Fedan tribe, a prudent man who had already heard of me and appreciated that my friends could do him much harm in the desert. Therefore he summoned the leader of the allied Ebede and consulted with him as to what he should do. The latter expressed the belief that he must protect me and my companions, as he could afford to blacken neither the face of his head chief Barjas nor that of his kinsman Bleyhan.

Leaving the leaders to their deliberations, I returned to my fellows who were crouching by our camels. The father of the robber who had stolen my carbine and my revolver was just demanding that I show him how to handle them, when I heard one of the fighters near me call another "Eben Hadhdhal." Turning toward the man thus addressed I asked his full name:

"Fanar eben Hadhdhal," he answered.

"O Fanar eben Hadhdhal," said I gravely, "look well at my white revolver there. It is destined for Meteb, the son of your head chief. Tell him I send word to him to get it from that robber."

No sooner had the father of the robber holding the revolver heard this than he took the weapon and handed it quickly over to Fanar declaring he did not want the friendship between himself and Meteb eben Hadhdhal to be undermined.

The commanders were still consulting and I was getting anxious about the result. After a while the father of the man who had robbed me and who had walked over to the conference approached me and in silence handed me my carbine. "*Al-hamdu lillah*, Allah be praised!" I exclaimed

loudly. Already I had the carbine, and now the robbers began to strip themselves of my garments and hand them to me, while I in turn lost no time in putting them on as fast as they took them off. Then the chief in command came to me and asked me what else had been taken from me, saying it was his wish to restore everything. Having thus repossessed myself of all my own property, I went over to help poor Tuman who had recovered scarcely one-third of his things because the robbers had given him back only those he asked for. As he did not know Arabic it was a difficult task for him, and Bleyhan and Mhammad fared no better; with the aid of Hawwash eben Ghafel, however, we eventually got back everything except a few small articles. The chiefs apologized and then rode off westward at the head of their men, intending to make a raid upon the herds of the Freje. I did not see the camel riders; according to Hawwash they were northeast of us in a flanking valley of Sab Biyar. Should the horsemen succeed in obtaining a large booty of camels, they would drive them thither.

Shortly before noon we resumed our journey, not to the east, however, but to the north-northeast. We did not have a drop of water; the thieving riders and their horses had emptied every bag we had, large and small. The nearest certain source of water was the springs of Sab Biyar or Swa; but we did not want to go there, because the reserves of the Fedan could have again attacked and robbed us. Nothing remained for us, then, but the springs of Eleyyaniyye, almost fifty miles distant, which were likewise unsafe since they lay near a route much favored by raiding parties. Nevertheless, we were certain of meeting the enemy at Sab Biyar, whereas at Eleyyaniyye there was a chance of avoiding them, and so we

decided to go to the latter place. Thanking Allah for having liberated us from the hands of the Fedan, we rode through an undulating plain where we stopped to give our camels an opportunity to pasture.

Not having a drop of water, we could not prepare dinner. We all feared thirst. Like my native companions I knew that a traveler feels most thirsty at the time when he has no water, whereas he rarely thinks of water when the bags are full. We all implored Allah to give us a shower before we reached Eleyyaniyye for, should it rain, Bleyhan assured us we were pretty certain to find water in cavities in the flat rocks. Presently it seemed as if Allah had heard our prayers, for the sky began to cloud, and here and there we could see high columns of rain. But only a few drops fell near us.

Having crossed the road leading from Damascus to the city of Hit on the Euphrates, we rested in a rather small basin that was enclosed on all sides. Barely had we spread out our covers when it began to drizzle, so we pitched the circular tent under which we could shelter the baggage as well as ourselves. The drizzle kept on all night, but no puddles of water formed anywhere, for the parched earth absorbed all that fell. We suffered so much from thirst during the night that we were glad to suck the water out of the wet canvas of the tent.

GREED

Before dawn the drizzle ceased but a moist, chilly mist filled the air, soaking even the things we had sheltered from the rain. As we did not want to fold and load the tent while it was wet, we kindled a fire inside to try to

dry the roof. A heavy fog made it impossible to see far until about nine o'clock when the fog began to lift; and at intervals the sun appeared. By this time we had reached a rocky terrain in which we discovered several rocky cavities filled with rain water. Dismounting from our camels we lay flat on the ground and gratefully lapped up the water. Bleyhan, who had been surveying the vicinity, found more rain water on a sloping rock in an artificial hollow. There were almost three quarts, enough for our tea. Having drunk, we proceeded on our way refreshed.

Suddenly, far in the northeast, we sighted a dark spot in striking contrast to its dull gray environment. Bleyhan, to whom I pointed it out, uttered merely a single word: "*zol*," a living being. Soon there were two dark spots and behind these appeared others and still others. It was evident that in front of us was another troop of riders and that they must have seen us just as we had seen them, since we were moving on an elevated plain. A new anxiety now beset us. Were they friends or enemies? If enemies, did they belong to the Aneze, or were they the subjects of the Ahali al-Jebel returning from a raid? Or were they the Hadediyyin, known for their cruelty? There were only four of us and at least forty of the strangers; besides, having had little water, we could not hope to offer an effective resistance. Mhammad urged us to hide, suggesting that the men might not have perceived us; but Bleyhan rejected the idea and told him to keep quiet. We were riding from west to east, whereas they were moving in the opposite direction and had us before them in the full light. Presently the group of strangers disappeared; they then scaled another height, and we could see that they were riding camels; then they

disappeared again. Did they want to surround us or to ambush us? We were greatly agitated. Finally, as we crossed a wide hollow we found the troop waiting for us in a glen. The moment we approached there was a shrill yell and their camels galloped towards us.

"Who are they?" I asked of Bleyhan. He was silent until they were about twenty yards away and then answered: "Zana Muslim," that is to say, the kinsfolk of the Rwala and our friends. I immediately called out as loud as I could:

"O Commander, I tender myself under your protection, I ride in front of your countenance! I am Musa, whose tent adjoins the tent of Nuri."

Meantime, however, ten—yes, twenty—hands had seized my camel, forced her to kneel, pulled me off the saddle, and thrust their fingers into my bag. I resisted the men with shouts and blows. At last the commander ran out to them and beat them with his camel stick, bawling out:

"Don't steal, thieves! don't steal, villains!"

From me he ran to my fellows, then rushed back to me to tear the disobedient away by force. At last he succeeded, but none too soon. Those contents of my saddle bag which had not been stolen were scattered all about; even my handy medicine box had been opened, a few vials broken, and others, with the tubes and pills, stolen. The thieves had already run to their camels to hide the loot.

When I called the commander's attention to this, he shouted after them:

"Where is the honest man who would take anything belonging to these men? If he does not return what he has, let his camels suffer therefor, and his children in the

morning and in the evening; so be it that never again shall he see the people of his kin and that he shall find no joy in the world!"

This imprecation he repeated several times, while one after another of his men brought back to us what they had stolen. The commander, Sayer eben Burman of the Freje, begged to be forgiven for the occurrence. He said he had started out thirty-two days before to make a raid against the Skur of the Amarat. While he was scouting for them he himself was observed and pursued and had to return without booty. His men mistook us for camel robbers; they thought we had stolen our camels from the Rwala and were now returning with the booty. That, they said, was why they attacked us. When I informed the commander of the danger that threatened his people from the Fedan, who would certainly raid their herds if they had not already done so, he was anxious to depart without delay. Accordingly, he urged his men to lose no time in returning the stolen articles, calling out to them:

"Come hither! Every one of you shall swear that he has not kept anything."

This helped so much that before long I had received everything that Sayer's men had taken. Nevertheless, each man had to take an oath before the commander, who gave him a handful of dry grass which he took in his right hand and said:

"By the life of these stems and by the life of the Lord whom we revere, I hereby declare that I have not taken more than I have returned."

Each man took the oath in this manner, and one of them added:

"I have not taken more than I returned except a few

raisins which are now in my belly and which I cannot return; but I am ready to make amends."

When all had taken the oath the commander thus addressed me:

"Observe, Sheikh Musa, that Sayer eben Burman's face is white. If still you miss anything, look for it with that other commander, Arhan eben Bawwash, who holds sway over his five kinsmen." As Arhan was disappearing, I called out:

"Arhan, should you not return all that I am still missing I shall blacken your countenance before Nuri and all the Rwala."

Arhan, an old man whose left eye had been knocked out and whose front teeth protruded, came in response to this threat and inquired which of his people had stolen anything from me.

"Who has stolen, I don't know," I replied, "but I am still missing many things. As Sayer's men don't have them, they must be hidden by you and your men. Why, you are hiding my camel stick! Maybe you have concealed other things as well." At that I seized my stick which he was holding under his mantle and challenged him thus:

"Swear, and let every one of your men swear as Sayer has done." When he objected I ordered Mhammad to search all the bags and saddles and the clothing of Arhan as well as of his associates. This succeeded. Arhan wanted to go away, but I detained him until we recovered everything he had taken.

Before noon we started northeast to the broad ridge of Seriyyat which was blazing in the rays of the sun. We made a detour to the left of our route, seeking protection in valleys as often as possible. The Seriyyat district is so rocky that many a slope affords but a bare ledge. Great

Fig. 2

The castle of Rhaba

Fig. 3

An ornamented litter

was our joy when shortly after noon we found in one of the rocks four cracks filled with water in such quantity that we did not need to draw from the dangerous wells of Eleyyaniyye, where all raiding parties water their animals.

While my companions filled the bags and watered the camels, I cautiously climbed a rocky ridge to a large pile of stones from which I could overlook the entire vicinity. Through binoculars I examined carefully every spur, every individual bowlder, and when I was not certain as to the identity of this or that object I scrutinized it again and again, for it is such spying that insures the safety of the traveler. Having discovered nothing suspicious, I returned to my companions and despatched Tuman to the stone pile to draw a map of the environs, while the rest of us gathered a little fuel for Mhammad and led the camels to a small basin full of dry grass and perennials. This done we followed with Bleyhan to the pile of stones, first taking care to discard our dark garments, for dark objects show up more clearly in the desert than does the white color of shirts and kerchiefs. We climbed up to the flat ridge and then, bending down with our hands extended forward, we ran to Tuman. There we sat down and examined the country.

THE SUN AND MOON

After we had finished our observations we waited until the sun sank low in the west so that we could pass along the ridge with greater safety. We advanced carefully over rough basalt stones and longed for the moon, which is so desirable in the desert.

"Our life is regulated by the moon," whispered Bleyhan. "The moon condenses the water vapors, attracts the rain clouds, and distills the beneficent dew on the pastures. It makes possible the growth and longer life of plants—particularly the perennials, which are of the greatest importance to the camels—and it grants to the traveling Bedouin comparative safety and refreshing sleep.

"But the sun would like to destroy us. It dries up all moisture, not only from the ground but from plants and animals as well as from man. It destroys all life and renders possible the invasion of enemies by allowing them a wide view. It also takes revenge on dead animals and human beings by transforming their bodies into deadly poison.

"The sun is a strong, bony female, full of passion and anger. Being sterile herself, she is jealous of all life and would spoil it while yet in embryo. Ever since we have known the woman sun she has always been equally old and equally mean. Whether she was ever any younger and has had children is not known to us, but I think if she could be restored to youth and could bear children, she would at once grow kinder.

"The moon is a merry youth, full of vigor and high spirits. The sun is his wife, but he does not live with her. Only on the last day of the old and the first of the new moon does he have to stay and devote himself to her, but her passions he is unable to satisfy. From fear of her and the needless waste of his vigor the moon grows very thin. At first he refused to gratify the desires of his old yet insatiable wife, but this enraged her and a fight took place between them, in which each knocked out the other's eye. Since that time both have had a dark stain or scar in that place. Each longs for the lost eye: the moon in order to

do good, the sun to hurt us still more. The moon sometimes says:

"'By Allah, if you had not knocked out my eye, I could make it possible for the falconer to hunt on a bright night.' To which the sun replies:

"'By Allah, if you had not knocked out my eye, I should have had a two-year-old she-camel roasted in a red-hot plain.'

"The sun and moon have a common enemy. This is a fish-like female monster called *hawt*. The *hawt* has persecuted them from time immemorial but seldom succeeds in deceiving them. Still, whenever she does so, she opens her maw and tries to swallow them. Sometimes they elude her, so that the monster gets only a small piece of them but at other times she gulps them down whole. The woman sun is so scorched and bony that even the *hawt* cannot digest her and she is soon vomited out unhurt. Then we are vexed that even the *hawt* cannot rid us of the murderous sun. But for the moon we are much concerned. When we notice that the *hawt* has bitten into the moon youth, most of our camps become agitated and from the tents pour out both men and women hurrying to the moon's assistance. The women beat their copper pots, the men brandish their spears, cut the air with their swords, and shoot, all of us crying in unison: 'O *hawt*, let the moon go!' If that is of no avail, the men leap on their horses, the women on the camels, and all gallop toward the place where the female monster is threatening the moon. So far we have always succeeded in rescuing the moon, but still we fear that the *hawt* may win; therefore there is a night watchman in every camp, whose duty it is not only to watch over our property, but over our benefactor, the moon, as well.

"We feel much uneasiness also on the first night of the new moon. Since the moon at that time appears neither west nor east, we watch the western sky anxiously after sunset on the following day in the hope of discovering at least a little piece of our emaciated benefactor. If we sight the new moon we show him to each other and raise our hands to him, crying:

" 'O thou new moon! O lord! O our benefactor! O powerful new moon! O thou, who savedst us from an attack this month just passed, wilt surely save us also in that which is now beginning!'

"We never know positively how many nights old the new moon is. We discuss it, fall to quarreling and then have to believe what the older and more experienced say about it. But from generation to generation confidence in the elders is on the wane. The young men are too clever and heed neither the advice nor the hints of their parents. Once an old father thus complained to his son:

" 'My son, there will come a disobedient generation, which will claim of the first night of the moon that it is already two nights old.'

"An old neighbor of his added: 'A perverse generation is coming; if you invite them to feast, they will never find enough to drink or eat; if you raise the war cry for help, they will not come.'

"The Bedouin is most happy from the eighth to the eighteenth night, for the moon in that period is still alive at sunrise. These nights are called the 'white.' We cannot then be discovered from afar, nor suddenly attacked from near by, as we see farther than the rifle would carry. Beginning with the eighth night we can sleep easily; from the tenth onwards we need not drive the camels together but can let them lie here and there around our tent. In

these nights the fire of a lonely traveler can be left burning; on war expeditions no lantern is needed to show the way—no wonder then that the grown youth wishes:

"'I would that the night were always bright moonlight, the depressions always freshly green, and that I might live on, growing neither younger nor older.'

"But after the eighteenth night trouble begins. Thieves prowl around, hostile troops ride through the country, the smallest fire can be seen from a great distance, and danger threatens from both near and far. Therefore the warning is heard over and over again: 'The twentieth night! Guard your property, wretch.' The darkness of the night fills the wakeful with terror, and we cry out: 'God save us from the evil of the darkness and of those who walk by night!'

"Yes, a bright moonlit night is far more welcome to the Bedouins than a sunny day, since in the daytime the Bedouin may be seen from anywhere, whereas in the moonlight he himself can see well ahead while the enemy cannot see him. Look, Musa, how the moon is struggling with the clouds which cover the western sky. Now he has won a victory. He has swung himself with glee above them and sails majestically as a lord among the heavenly lanterns—the pale stars."

THROUGH THE KMUSA TERRITORY

Silhouetted above the eastern horizon, our shadows moved in the mist like huge phantoms towards the moon. Neither we nor our camels uttered the slightest sound. Now and then the sand whispered or a rolling pebble sounded hollowly, but otherwise all was still. After a

little while a strong icy wind arose from the southwest.

The route became increasingly difficult. We crossed several short gullies and descended a steep bluff before we finally reached the valley of Eleyyaniyye which spreads into a basin bordered by hills on the north and by a precipitous wall on the south. Although we preferred to proceed, the cold, 14° F., compelled us to stop. We encamped by two bowlders on the ground, which was covered with a frozen crust. The bowlders were free from débris only on the northern side and offered us, therefore, no protection from the wind; we had to weight down our covers to prevent their being blown away. The fact that the wells were near and the way thereto—often frequented by robbers—close by, made us alert. I slept scarcely half an hour during that night and shivered with cold as perhaps I never had before.

After midnight we heard a noise on the route about three hundred paces distant. Bleyhan and I listened, wondering what it could be. In a moment it was repeated. I roused Mhammad and told him to guard the camp and, with carbines ready, Bleyhan and I crept in the direction of the noise. Suddenly I discerned about twenty yards in front of me two squat shadows: wolves running to the southeast. Allah be praised they were not human beasts of prey! Satisfied, we returned to the camp, for now we were sure of the absence of men in the vicinity, otherwise wolves would not have ventured so near us. Toward morning the entire desert became enveloped in a heavy fog which made the cold even harder to bear.

Crossing a swell very cautiously later in the day, we hurried to the east. My camel was so saddle-sore that she complained during the day, but in the evening she uttered not a sound and paced swiftly ahead. We spoke only when

it was necessary and then in whispers. The Bedouins say: "When on a journey through the inner desert, be on the lookout at all times of the day, but in the night keep silence."

Late in the evening we lay down by a solitary hill.

In the morning of Tuesday, December 8, we journeyed through a fertile plain covered with black soil three yards deep, which might be made still more fertile if it could be irrigated regularly. But in this inner part of the desert regular rains are rare. The entire plain was parched. Last year's plants were ash-gray and among them were many holes in which were innumerable jumping mice. Bleyhan, whose attention could not be attracted by anything in this monotonous plain, recited in a low voice:

"O lightning flashing at the close of night!
Awake while others slept, I saw thy fire
Flash from high summits, difficult of ascent—
On clear white nights so swiftly spreads the light.
Rise, saddle and mount the obedient camel,
Let not the shin of the foreleg rub the breast.
Then eager, with pace fathom long, she'll stride the plain:
The pure-blooded beast over coarse sand runs to her rest.
Touch but the rein, she roars, she prances as if
A spook were creeping, were crawling along her flanks,
Now close to her bowed head! She lifts it and, seeing the thing
That is haunting her, plunges wildly away in dread.
How like the male ostrich descending through some defile,
As from the upland men fire upon his wings!
He flies for his life. His legs measure fathoms, the spread
Of the wings adds terror. In terror the mad bird springs!
Pure-blooded, he runs when in flight, like one driven or driving:
Knows how to defend, to attack, though he reasons it not.

Ah! my heart has rebelled, such a word is this:
A cup of snake poison my soul's mate has given to me!
But since the day when she beckoned me twice with her fingers
To its zenith is come the full moon of my bliss."

SEEKING A BROTHER

In the morning frost was lying on our coverings. Before noon we saw numerous camel herds. We stopped to let our camels eat. Bleyhan immediately made a trip to the herdsmen to inquire about the camping grounds of his relatives and about some Amarat or Dahamshe clan who might be camping with them. After an hour he returned with the report that his mother was camping at the well of Tayyariyye in the valley of Miyah and likewise the Jelaid clan of the Dahamshe, who were kin of the Amarat. He said that Fahad eben Hadhdhal, the head chief of the Amarat and Dahamshe, had been dwelling for a long time in his settlement near Kerbela but that his son Meteb was said to be camping somewhere on the southern slope of the ridge of Bishri. As I wished to visit the latter and could not do so without securing as a brother or guide one of his subjects, I was glad to learn that the Jelaid camp was in the valley of Miyah.

"We shall go directly to Tayyariyye and from there we shall follow the valley of Miyah to the Bishri ridge, where Meteb is said to be."

At Tayyariyye we found some of Bleyhan's relatives, his sister among them, but we learned that his mother had gone on to the basin of Kaara and that the Jelaid could be found near Warka.

In the evening we reached the wells of Warka, where there was a large camp at the northern end of which we made our camels kneel.

There came to us the thudding sounds of drums and tambourines, together with the shrill outcries of a man.

"That is surely a diviner who has become frenzied by the strain of the drum and tambourine and now calls on Allah and His intermediary."

"Whom do you call a diviner, Bleyhan?"

"The diviners are men or women to whom Allah manifests through His interpreter the secret of the future. Disciples attach themselves to them and play on various instruments, most often on drums or tambourines, until the diviner becomes frenzied and, transformed to a mouthpiece of Allah's representative, repeats his words. We, the Sbaa and Amarat, esteem the diviners, the Rwala expel them."

In the morning my companions gathered a quantity of half dry *adhob* (a shrub with yellowish pinnate leaves) and a little camel dung with which we warmed our coffee. Soon afterwards several Arabs came to visit us, the owner of the nearest tent bringing us a wooden dish full of warm camel's milk.

Learning that there was only one tent of the Jelaid at Warka, as all the others were a little farther to the southeast, I sent Bleyhan to the nearest tent to inquire whether any of the tenants would guide us. Bleyhan returned and informed me that he had come to an agreement with a guide. He pointed to an elderly man of mischievous countenance and with black teeth, among which were prominent two lustrous, white incisors like the fangs of a rapacious animal. He was very repulsive to me. Sitting down in front of me he warmed his bare, dirty knees at

the fire, swinging his legs above the blaze in an oscillating fashion, helping himself to our coffee, and spitting constantly into the fire. And this man, by the name of Zeyd, had been hired as our guide by Mhammad for three-quarters of a *mejidiyye* a day!

TO THE CHIEF METEB

Filling our bags with water, we left Warka and in the afternoon reached a wide plain where there was a large growth of dry, scant grass which, though only eight inches high and very sparse, looked like whole fields of ripening grain. But nowhere behind these grainfields loomed the familiar church tower. Dark clouds were assembling in the sky and, when the first drops spattered down, we stopped and pitched the tent. But, alas, it rained only two hours!

Before noon we rode through a valley overgrown with bunches of *ruthe*.[1] The dry branches of this plant are of a bright grayish-white color, as though made of the finest nickel, and they glisten in the sunlight, giving a pleasant silvery tinge to the monotonous landscape. It is easy to tell from far away where the *ruthe* grows.

To the west there appeared several dark belts of the mountain chain of Abu Rijmen which reaches from Palmyra to the ridge of Bishri on the northeast. South of Bishri the plain forms a gigantic undulation, on which we could see camels and tents. But the tents were still very far off, although they seemed to be immediately in front of us, owing to the mirage so common in deserts.

[1] *Salsola lancifolia*, Boiss.; perennial with small, prickly leaves and small pinkish flowers.

The lowland through which we were passing was glittering in the gold of the setting sun, when suddenly there appeared in front of us a horseback rider who stopped, rifle in hand, and scrutinized us; concluding that we were peaceful travelers he galloped towards us, returned our greetings and then, touching with bare heels the flanks of his white mare, he circled around us at a gallop. He told us that Meteb eben Hadhdhal was encamped south of the well of Kreta, he questioned us as to the location of the camps of various tribes and clans, and then departed rapidly to announce to Meteb my contemplated visit. Numerous herdsmen kept driving their herds past on our right and left.

It was dark when we reached the first tent and dismounted in front of the one designated for Meteb's guests. Meteb had two tents; in one with five central poles he lived with his family and in the other he received his guests. By the side of the latter we pitched our circular tent and, having ordered that announcement of my arrival be made to Meteb, who was sitting in the guests' tent by the fire in the center of a large gathering, I awaited his greeting. In a few minutes a man of his kin came to welcome me and to beseech me in the name of the head chief to enter his tent; barely had I taken five paces before Meteb came out to meet me. He greeted me cordially and led me into his tent, all present rising at his command and remaining standing until I was seated.

Meteb sat on my right. With my left hand I leaned on a camel saddle, against the opposite side of which an older chief was also leaning. In front of me was a large quadrangular hole in which blazed an enormous fire. Beyond the fire to the left sat a black slave, and in front of him stood four coffee pots, one of them very large.

Behind the negro and around the entire fireplace crowded the Bedouins, warming their bare feet. Another slave brought some fuel and cast it into the fire over the heads of the company. Having greeted all present, I was welcomed individually by all the chiefs, who inquired how I fared. At this the slave who was preparing the coffee rose abruptly, scoured a coffee cup with a dirty rag, took it in his left hand and one of the smaller coffee pots in his right, set it before me and began to pour the coffee into the cup in a thin thread from a considerable height. When the cup was about one-fifth full he handed it to me and stood waiting. Tasting the coffee, I smacked my lips, took a long gulp, glanced at the company, and after three more cautious gulps handed the empty cup to the slave, who filled it twice more. This ceremony of welcome ended, I was free to do as I pleased.

Meteb had disappeared, so I went to my tent, where Tuman and I ascertained the latitude. We had barely finished when in came Meteb and invited me to supper. Near my place lay a large, flat copper plate covered with thin pieces of bread like pancakes and a heap of camel meat. A slave poured a few drops of water on three fingers of my right hand, whereupon I knelt on my left knee by the plate, reclined backward on my left heel, and, pronouncing words in the name of Allah, began to eat. Tearing small bits off the bread, I kneaded them with pieces of meat which Meteb, next to me, pulled off and threw to me, and then I put them in my mouth. As soon as I had finished, my companions who ate with me rose, and the dish was passed to others. A slave poured a little water upon my hands and someone even proffered me a small handkerchief, so that I could dry them. The others, how-

ever, wiped their mouths and hands on the ropes and sides of the tent.

After supper Meteb seated himself by me and we gradually became engaged in a whispered conversation on various topics which promised to go on indefinitely. When I confided to Meteb my intention of leaving early in the morning he deprecated it, insisting that I must remain at least one day more so that we could become better acquainted and reënforced in our friendship. It was past midnight when I retired to my tent.

The immense undulation upon which the camp of the Amarat was established consists of white limestone similar to alabaster and is covered with coarse sand in which are rooted large bushes of *rimth*,[1] often attaining the height of a yard and a half. In all the wells the water is a little bitter, hence the Amarat were bringing drinking water from the well of Kebazheb.

For breakfast Meteb sent us mashed dates immersed in hot butter, with pancakes; and after a while he came and asked how I had slept under the protection of the Amarat tribe. He was about twenty-five years of age, with features that bore a resemblance to the Semitic type of the ancient Assyrians. His teeth were white and lustrous, save one in the upper jaw which was prominent by its blackness; he spoke very slowly, ponderously, and calmly, with a sort of lisping affectation. I gave him a nickel-plated Gasser revolver with a hundred rounds of ammunition, which delighted him immensely. When I had inquired of him about the valleys, wells, and ruins in the territory of the oasis of Shethatha, and noted that he stated

[1] *Haloxylon articulatum*, Cav.; large bush with needle-shaped leaves and spikes of small whitish flowers.

the directions and distances correctly, I resolved to remain with him until the next morning.

I did not see him until towards evening, when he directed Mhammad to write for me in his name a letter to all the commanders of the raiding and marauding detachments of the Amarat and Dahamshe, ordering them not to dare to attack or rob me, a friend of his. Not being able to write, he affixed his seal to the sheet. Of course I gave him my thanks, but I was quite aware that the scrap of paper would be of little use to me, since none of the leaders of any Amarat marauding troop was capable of reading; and who was there to compel them to believe a letter read by a stranger commanding them to abandon desired booty?

IN FOG TO THE EUPHRATES

On the morning of December 15 we built a fire, prepared breakfast, and loaded our baggage. Meteb came to say good-by and escorted us half a mile on our way. We headed first toward the east, later turning to the northeast. The day was very gloomy, with so dense a fog that before we had been gone more than a few minutes our guide Zeyd declared his inability to keep the course and proposed that we return and wait in the tent for the fog to lift. I had to resort to the alternative of acting as leader myself with the compass to guide me. It was not an easy task, however, on a level plain overgrown evenly with various plants.

Towards evening we saw before us upon a wide swell a large herd belonging to the tribe of the Fedan and near by two other herds of white camels called *maghatir*. The Fedan are famous for breeding white camels, and the

maghatir herds belonging to the chief of the Rwala are replenished and enlarged almost entirely from the herds of the Fedan. Not feeling certain of finding any more tents farther to the east and wishing to avoid meeting with a marauding party of the Shammar or the Shwaya, we encamped in the proximity of the tents. When we were unloading our baggage, Bleyhan sang:

"These are the borders of the camp where dwells my darling.
Hail, O Arabs, with you Shiha stays!
As prey her brother Adhrub brings the sumpter camels;
He has taught the warning cry to herdsmen on their ways.
Her cheeks, how like the lightning! like flashes of the lightning
From clouds of milk or rainy belt, so Shiha's cheeks are bright'ning."

We set out to the east-southeast. Zeyd and Bleyhan wanted to turn to the south, but I insisted on the easterly course. Both complained that we should go astray and should never reach the fortress of Rhaba and the town of Miyadhin. A Bedouin knows his way only when he can follow formations visible from a distance; in a level, monotonous plain he is a bad guide. He can point out the direction perfectly but is not able to hold the course he designates. He states with precision that a certain spot lies to the left or to the right of the spring sunrise, and yet he deviates immediately to the southeast or northeast and changes his course constantly. His saying that he rides or walks between the north and the south may be truthfully conceded. It is because of his ignorance of the value of time that he cannot comprehend why a traveler who has not been reared in the desert refuses to follow him.

A Bedouin is accustomed to be led. When the camp is moved, he walks calmly behind the loaded camels which follow the chief, and on war expeditions with a vacant mind he follows the commander, who again is led in most instances by some member of the Sleyb tribe, who know the desert best. Leaderless, a Bedouin is as incapable of finding and maintaining his course as is his camel, which becomes desperate when it loses sight of the herd with its leader.

Before us, as we swung along, the eastern sky at the horizon looked as if it were equipped with shutter slats. The individual ribs lay in a horizontal position, glowing a vivid red and crossed by bluish rays of light. Suddenly the slats closed and all became blue—nay, black. Our camels, trotting to the east, kept swaying their heads and necks like inverted pendulums, and we were swung to and fro with them. Zeyd was enveloped up to his head in his old fur coat and mantle, his elevated right hand with which he directed the camel overlapped by the long sleeve of his coat, from which protruded a thick camel stick with a wide and oblong head. The stick swung back and forth in time with the swaying of the camel's head and neck, until in the morning mist it looked as if a bird with a large rump were sitting on the camel, the camel stick forming its neck and head, Zeyd's body its body, and his head its rump.

At last we sighted the castle of Rhaba with its four-edged corner towers projecting above the plain (Fig. 2). At noon, through a gap, we caught our first glimpse of the River Euphrates and to the east of it, far below us, the Mesopotamian plain. Everything was veiled in gray, desolate and lifeless. Even the leaves of the palms lifting

FIG. 4
At the wells of Mlosi

FIG. 5
An eroded rock

their heads above the city of Miyadhin had a grayish-yellow tinge, the sign of winter and of death.

The descent from the edge down to the hillock upon which the castle of Rhaba towers was very difficult, because the ground consisted of soft, crumbling stones.

From Rhaba we set out through the flood plain to the town of Miyadhin, which beckoned to us with its minarets and palm trees. We rode among numerous small fields criss-crossed with irrigation ditches. The deeper ditches are joined with the shallow ones from which the water irrigates small fields of some thirty yards square enclosed by earthen walls about four inches high to prevent the water from flowing away.

We encamped southeast of the town on the afternoon of Wednesday, December 16, near a merchant caravan that was carrying fresh dates from the oasis of Shethatha to Aleppo. A needy woman offered to sell us fuel, consisting of wood and camel dung. Both were very expensive. I ordered our water bags to be filled from the nearest well where merchant caravans were watering their camels. Then I helped Tuman to calculate the latitude. Mhammad and Bleyhan went to the town to purchase dates.

III. TO THE CAMP OF EBEN SMEYR

BACK TO THE DESERT

We set out in the morning in a dense fog for the basin of Kaara. Our way was monotonous and fatiguing. In the undulating plain there was nothing to rouse our interest; our camels did not find any pasture. The herds of the Fedan had eaten everything. Only by afternoon did we come upon several spots where *ruthe* and *shih* (a kind of wormwood) were growing and we rested there for supper. Having enough water we made some *shay*, as my companions called the slightly sweetened water in which a little tea was brewed. The *shay* with bread tasted good to them, though the water we had brought from Miyadhin was so salty and polluted with clay that it left in our cups a sediment nearly a little finger thick.

Toward evening the western sky made a gorgeous picture. Dark gray was the level, desolate desert; a near summit was almost black; the horizon beyond glowed a blazing red, while high aloft swam countless clouds like snowy billows as the great lustrous ball of the sun set. Gradually the snowy clouds in the west grew red and those in the east blue; the bluish tinge spread westward, the desert darkened, the sky became gray, and we were passing amid the glory like the camel riders of Doré's great paintings. I had not thought of Doré for a long time but here in the desert he came to mind again. He is right in rendering his characters of the infinite desert as superhuman giants, for there everything projecting above

the horizon assumes immense dimensions. A man nearer to the horizon is nearer to heaven, and above the horizon in heaven reigns Allah who is greater than all that He has created.

But it was a desolate plain in which we were journeying and it seemed all the more dreary when the camels' feet crunched the dry stalks of *shih*, growing here and there in small patches. In one of these spots we encamped and spent the night, keeping a sharp lookout for marauders.

TURKI, PATRON OF RAIDERS

In the morning the fuel was too soaked with dew for us to kindle a fire. To the southwest gaped the entrances into the three gullies of Heriyyan, in the central one of which Turki eben Mheyd, head chief of the Fedan, lies buried. He was brother of Turkiyye, widow of the late emir Sattam. All the raiders and robbers honor his grave.

"Why do you revere the grave of Turki?" I asked Bleyhan. "I supposed you did not erect sepulchers to patrons as the settlers do."

"We Bedouins have no patrons like those of the settlers, who declare we shall not be admitted into Paradise. Should I speak the truth I should say we do not even desire to come into a paradise where the settlers would dwell. We honor Turki because he was a pet of Allah. He undertook countless raids and returned from them all unhurt and with much booty. On one occasion he and his raiders were suffering the terrible torments of thirst in the desert. In his distress Turki prayed:

" 'O Allah! O my Lord and Father! Have mercy on us and send us rain.'

"Imagine, Musa, what happened! Allah granted his wish. He sent from the northwest a dark cloud; His angel compelled it to halt above the heads of Turki's companions and pour forth all its water. So Turki was called The Little Son of his Lord because Allah, moved by the supplication of such a little son, had brought the rain cloud to their rescue in that season of midsummer when it never rains in the desert.

"When raiders returning with booty come to Turki's grave, they make a fat camel kneel, cut her throat so that the blood sprinkles the tombstone, and shout: 'This is thy supper, O protector of the Alya herds!' The entrails they sometimes eat at the grave while the flesh and the hide are carried home."

A FOND MOTHER

On Sunday, December 20, we at last sighted an oblong table-shaped ridge off to the right in the limitless haze, whereupon Bleyhan shouted:

"That's Karat Naaja; we are in the basin of Kaara at last!" To the east the basin is enclosed by the Afayef rocks, where spirits have their dwellings.

"Many travelers have testified that the Afayef rocks are inhabited by spirits," explained Bleyhan. "They like best bare crags and of such there are many in Afayef. Last year some travelers rode by. Below a hillside a hedgehog of extraordinary size was warming himself in the rays of the sun. Dismounting, one of the travelers caught the animal and put it into his empty saddle bag, intending to kill and roast it at the next halting place for a savory meal. But before long they heard a female voice crying:

"'O Mansur, where art thou?'

"Turning around they saw an elderly woman running after them repeating the call. Finally the hedgehog's voice was heard out of the bag:

"'Mansur lies curled up in a little bag.' Startled, the man threw the hedgehog on the ground and instantly it changed into a man and ran towards the woman."

In the basin of Kaara and its neighborhood I locate the camp of the Ismailian sect of the Carmathians from which in the year 906 they undertook countless raids against the settlements on the Euphrates. In that year, led by Nasr, they plundered Palestine and Syria. Pursued, they took refuge in the desert and encamped at the watering holes in Kaara. The Moslem army, prevented from further pursuit by lack of water, established quarters at Rhaba. The Carmathians made an onslaught from their camp against the settlement of Hit, stormed the town's outskirts at sunrise, pillaged the ships moored there in the river, and after three days retreated with three thousand camels which carried the booty, chiefly wheat, into the desert. Afterwards a second army was despatched from Baghdad in pursuit of them but in vain, for they had polluted every source of drinking water between their base in Kaara and the Euphrates. It was not until this second army had obtained from the settlers enough camels and large leather water bags that an offensive was decided upon. Having been informed of this plan, the members of the Kalb tribe, who were in alliance with the Carmathians, assassinated the commander, Nasr, shipped his head to the commander of the Baghdad army, and then retreated to the southern territory. In Kaara there remained only remnants of the Carmathians, whom the Moslem armies left in peace.

Soon we saw herds of camels and smoke.

"Allah be praised!" exclaimed Bleyhan. "Our Arabs are at Mlosi. O Allah, grant that Thy servant may meet there with his mother."

At last we halted in front of a small, narrow tent alongside of which we pitched my round one, and presently Bleyhan's mother came to us, a little, thin old woman who had dyed her hair yellow in my honor. Greeting me, she proffered her hand and thanked me for treating her boy so well. The boy, taller than she by a head and a half, hugged and kissed her repeatedly, and the old lady with tears in her eyes and a smile on her lips complained because I had retained him so long:

"Only four days ago, Musa, I received the tidings that he fared well, but before, by Allah Himself, for more than forty days I had been grieving because I knew not what had become of him."

Even before our tent was up we were besieged by a crowd of curious Arabs who came in throngs to greet Bleyhan and in quest of news. They settled nonchalantly by our fire, drank all our coffee and would even have devoured our supper had I not told my fellows to take it into the tent. While we were endeavoring to ascertain the latitude they inquired of Bleyhan:

"What is Musa trying to shoot with that instrument? Does he know of any treasures in the rocky wall of Mlosi? Why is he examining the sky? He is surely waiting for a messenger of Allah to inform him of hidden treasures."

All Arabs are imbued with the idea that in Kaara there are many treasures guarded by spirits.

Bleyhan gave them no answer, which made them really believe that we had come to Kaara after treasure. Their interest in us was so persistent that during the night I had

to admonish these guests many times to be still and allow us to refresh ourselves with sleep—but to no avail. Bleyhan finally had to use both persuasion and force to disperse them. Afterward he went to the neighboring tent of his mother for the night. Again and again there fell upon my ears the loving ejaculation of his mother: "O little boy of mine! O my dear child!"

Immediately after sunrise, December 21, I ascended with Tuman and Zeyd to the rocky summit that encloses the Kaara basin on the side above the wells of Mlosi (Fig. 4). It consists of two horizontal layers of porous sandstone. The upper layer, which is twelve yards thick, is solid; the lower, about twenty yards thick, is very soft and of a blue and red color. Because the lower one does not resist rain and wind as does the solid upper layer, large blocks are frequently torn away from it, splitting and breaking into sand and waste. Thus the upper crust is without foundation in some places, while at others it overhangs, and large bowlders break off and roll into the ravine. Because of its multiformity this rocky cliff, especially in its upper portion, resembles the ruins of an old castle. The ascent is obviously very difficult. Having crawled up on the soft substructure I discovered spacious caves between it and the upper layer. The walls of the upper layer are almost perpendicular and at their protected, more accessible points are covered with a multitude of Bedouin tribal signs and primitive carvings of gazelles, camels, horses, and so on. In the hope of discovering inscriptions also I crawled from bowlder to bowlder but found no writing except the thrice-recorded name of Ali.

In the camp there remained not a single man. All followed us to the top of the rocky wall in the conviction

that we were going to some cave or hollow to extract hidden treasure. They wanted to see it!

Bleyhan called my attention three or four times to the advantage of having a good hound, a *sluki,* and said his cousin would be glad to give me one *gratis.* I told him to bring forward the dog to see if it would do. He produced it immediately. The *sluki* was not large but lank and very thin, about two years old. Mhammad, who claimed to be a good judge of hunting dogs, declared that he was good, whereupon I decided to accept the gift, and Tuman made a collar for the dog, Kattaf as he was called, so that we could tie him to the tent. In return for the dog I considered a gift worth two *mejidiyyat* ($1.80) adequate; but when I asked Bleyhan's opinion he replied coolly that his uncle's son expected a present from me of at least ten *mejidiyyat.*

Bleyhan was active in the interest of his kin. Still, who could blame him when his kinsmen possessed nothing? In the desert the poor have no easy lot.

I wished to visit the wells of Lmat in the valley of Hawran, intending to go from there due west to the hill of Tinf. Zeyd boasted that he was familiar with every nook south of Kaara; but from past experience I did not believe him and instructed Bleyhan to inquire thoroughly as to the route we should take in order to avoid unnecessary deviations in the rugged district.

Before our departure Bleyhan's aged mother came to me and, laying her hands on my shoulders, said:

"Behold, O Sheikh Musa! my son Bleyhan is as near to me as her collar is to the turtle dove. Behold, I take this collar from my neck and lay it upon thy neck." These are the words with which a dying person appoints a guardian for his children. So the mother, fearing that she might

depart to Allah's realms before her son returned again, implored me to take such care of him as a guardian would.

TOWARDS THE WELLS OF LMAT

It soon became apparent that neither Zeyd nor Bleyhan knew the way. With difficulty we reached the bottoms of the troughs of great gullies where it was more level and we could better maintain our course.

Toward evening, on December 22, after skirting the hill of Naser on the left, we halted to permit our camels to graze. We did not take fodder for our camels; they had to seek their own food. Even while we rode they would bend and pick the plants they passed if they were hungry—a jerky habit most unpleasant for us. So it was better for us to halt at any place affording good pasturage and not try to resume the journey until the camels had satisfied their hunger. Our cartographical work impelled us to prefer pastures in proximity to heights, and yet the pastures must lie shielded from sight. Likewise we had to have fuel for the preparation of our food. It was not easy to fulfill all these requirements. How often we desired to make a sketch map of a vicinity from a hill, but, alas, there would be neither pasturage nor fuel in the neighborhood. Or perhaps there would be abundant pasturage and plentiful fuel, but it would be in a hollow from which there was no outlook. If I did not stop in the first instance, Tuman was displeased; in the second instance, my other companions grumbled. Yet it was imperative to take the utmost care of our camels, for only through their efficiency could we make progress. They must be well fed.

In the morning we crossed numerous paths worn into the ground to a considerable depth throughout hundreds—perhaps thousands—of years by camels going to Lmat. They pass through a dark brown, almost black, plain covered with flints.

Near Mlosi the Arabs had told us that the chief, Eben Shtewi, was camping at Lmat, whereas those whose camps we were passing maintained that he had already left. The Arabs likewise reported that the wells of Lmat were being utilized by all the raiding parties and brigands that come from the east and southeast. Loath to expose myself and my companions to any unnecessary danger, I scanned the route to the wells very intently. Though barely six miles away from them we could not as yet see any camels or smoke rising from a camp.

"The wells are deserted," insisted Bleyhan. "Allah only knows which raiding party is hiding near them. Why should we visit them when we can supply ourselves with water at Mlosi and then return to Nuri by the way leading from Damascus to Hit?"

So we turned to the northwest. About an hour later we found six riders directly behind us and seized our weapons. One of the unknown pursuers darted ahead of the others and, raising his rifle, approached us at a gallop, his hair and shirt sleeves flapping in the air.

"Who is he?" we asked of each other. When he came up to us he reined in his mare abruptly and addressed us:

"Who are you?"

"Those you see. Who are you?"

"He whom you see."

At that moment Bleyhan recognized in him one of his kindred, and he told us why we had been pursued. Eben Shtewi, it seemed, was indeed camping at Lmat, but out

of sight in a deep basin. Although we had seen neither his camels, nor his tents, we ourselves had been observed by a sentry hidden on a hill who, noting our sudden change of direction, gave the alarm. Thereupon this cavalcade of horsemen and camel riders had been despatched after us.

On learning the reason of our deflection, the pursuers withdrew but after a while two riders armed with spears darted up to us. The older man, whose nose had been cut off, touched me with his spear in the back, and my camel in the neck, and demanded roughly that we turn about and visit the chief Eben Shtewi.

"Greet Eben Shtewi in my name and tell him that I am the man he visited at the wells of Barde," I answered our tormentor; whereupon his companion, after scrutinizing me closely, declared:

"By your life, O Brother! I know this traveler. I escorted our chief to his fire where I was served with excellent tea." These words calmed the other rider and we were allowed to proceed.

About a quarter of an hour later, however, still another horseman approached us, who did nothing but ride alongside of Bleyhan for some time and inquire about everything that had occurred in the west, north and east. We, who had come from the west and visited the north and east, were able to give him much interesting news, which he wanted to divulge at greater length to his chief. When departing he sang:

"We are the rampart for the first onslaught:
Be it ever so fierce, we shall not waver.
For wives of our enemies, who love them naught,
Are seeking another man's favor!"

At noon we were overtaken by a Slubi mounted upon a white ass who also sought information concerning the

camps of the various tribes, but he, a mere son of the desert, got no answer either from Bleyhan or from Zeyd. Far behind him we noted a migrating family of Sleyb (*pl.* of Slubi). When he had left us, without having attained his purpose, I proposed to stop and dine.

"Do not stop now, Musa," urged Bleyhan, "or else the Sleyb, hungry children of the desert, will devour all our food."

After dinner we proceeded through a plain overgrown with various perennials and in the evening encamped at its end, for we had reached such rugged territory we could proceed only by daylight. The night was very cold; the ground, our coverings and even our water bags froze.

In the morning we spied for a fleeting moment a herd of gazelles.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE HAMAD

In the evening we entered for the first time the endless plain of the Hamad. An overwhelming feeling gripped me. Nowhere is there any elevation; everything is flat and level; below is the desert; above, the sky; and between them, man. How small yet how near to the Creator we seem to be. Wherever we turn, the heavens are near. It seems as if we must reach them where they touch the earth.

The sun was setting on the limitless sea of plain, immersed in a golden light in which every mean little plant stem glittered. The lowest parts of the horizon were bluish, while above hung clouds like stalactites with rosy centers and purple borders. Above the sun, up to the very dome of the heavens, were the clouds, translucent as if woven from a multitude of white ostrich feathers, and re-

vealing through them here and there patches of blue sky. Gradually the stalactites acquired an olive tinge; the higher ones turned first pale yellow and then orange. Below, the western sky blazed like molten gold, while in the east gray blended with the bluish tint of the south and north. Suddenly the desert became ash-gray, save for the lingering rays of the setting sun. It was Christmas Eve!

All at once, where the sun had been, the narrow sickle of a new moon swung into the sky and Bleyhan, lifting his eye and extending his hands toward it, greeted it thus:

"New Moon, O Master! O Dispenser of Happiness!"

All this time, enveloped in our mantles and holding our loaded carbines in readiness, we had been clinging close to our camels as they hastened westward with long strides. Presently they knelt, we tied their front legs, and lay down upon the frozen ground. That Christmas Eve I shall never forget.

Until the first rays of the sun appeared we did not dare to build a fire with its telltale smoke here in the Hamad. Before noon the spirits of the desert were at play north of us, fanning the sand into funnels which flew high up and raced madly through the air, while to the south they showed us a lake surrounded with fresh vegetation. Tuman allowed himself to be deceived by the spirits into recording this lake on the map. The plants and the shrubs on the edge of the water appeared unusually large, resembling at intervals groups of riders on camels. The temperature was rising; it became almost hot.

At noon we reached the road leading from Damascus to Hit, which we followed westward. By this route at that time a special carrier brought the English mail from Damascus to Baghdad, whence it was sent to Basra and

India. The postmaster who contracted for this delivery from the English Government ordinarily lived in Baghdad and kept six mounted messengers, one of whom left Baghdad for Damascus every eighth day, returning the same way. From Damascus to the settlement of Dmeyr he used a horse, from Dmeyr to Hit a camel. At Hit he crossed the Euphrates in a boat and thence rode to Baghdad, in winter upon a camel, in summer upon a horse, because in summer the dangerous flies would have killed the camel. The trip from Damascus to Baghdad took regularly eleven days. A round trip between the two places consumed forty days, for which the messenger received from the contractor three pounds sterling, out of which he had to defray his living expenses. His gross earnings were much larger, however, as he often took along various nomadic merchants and camel traders who rode his spare animals or entrusted to him various pieces of baggage to be delivered for them at Baghdad, at Damascus, or at some camp in the desert.

Shortly after noon we perceived in the west a thin dust cloud and, a few minutes after, I called to my escorts:

"There are camel riders in front of us."

More trouble! Who could they be, well-wishers or foes? In numbers they were much stronger than we. Would there be a combat? Although they were riding slowly, might they not suddenly rush upon us at a gallop? We spied among them several men on foot and two animals bearing heavy loads. Were they a band of marauders returning with loot? To what tribe did they belong? Suddenly one of the men rode out of the group, whereupon Bleyhan straightway brought his camel to the front and imitated his movements, saying:

"See, Musa, they are indicating that they are friends."

The strangers proved to be Akeyl, camel traders, on their way from Egypt and Damascus to their families in Baghdad. We as well as they were satisfied. One of the men, who had known me in Damascus, approached and informed me that Nuri eben Shalan was no longer camping in the lava territory of Iyath but was somewhere to the south of the rain pools of Seykal. As we had but little water left I directed my companions to inquire of the Akeyl about the people in the neighborhood of our route. The Akeyl asserted that no rain pool in the vicinity would be filled with water now, but that we should find enough water to fill our bags and to water our camels in the depressions of the level rocks in the valley of Murra.

In the morning we carried things out and made a fire in the tent to thaw out the frozen canvas lest it crack in folding.

We rode on a plain covered with coarse gravel in which there were small, sparsely scattered patches of thin perennials. Our camels grazed but they could not satisfy their hunger, for all the plants were dead: no rain had fallen in that locality for the past year.

Before evening we passed an ancient burial ground. There we found several circular walls about sixteen inches high, built of stones without mortar and each provided with a narrow entrance. In the middle of one of them was a four-cornered grave.

After sunrise we traversed the valley of Sab Biyar about six miles south of two low cones that have at their base wells of the same name. These wells we did not approach for fear of meeting robbers or raiders. The wells of Sab Biyar, called also Swa, are famous in Arabic literature, because on the march from Irak to Syria in the year 634 the warriors commanded by Khaled, son of Walid,

refreshed themselves with their water and thus escaped certain death.

To the north of the wells there arose the snow-covered frontier ridge which stretches from Damascus to the Euphrates, here enveloped in clouds, there bright with the lustrous glitter of its peaks. On our left lay a camping ground that had evidently been occupied but a little while before. There were the deepened fireplaces, each with three stones on which a copper kettle had been placed; heaps of fuel lay about as well as improvised beds of stones and brush, and in places camels had lodged. A short time before, men had been there, perhaps relatives and friends; now all was still. We longed for companions. We had water for that day only, and for two days we had been unable to bake bread because we lacked flour. In the camp we could have supplied ourselves with both, inquired the way to the camp of Nuri, and rested; but the camp was deserted, its inhabitants were far away and robbers perhaps lay in wait for us. Bleyhan recited:

"I lament for my kinsmen, O people! I am not among those who are abused,
For I think that one who laments for his kinsmen deserves not abuse.
I reached the spot where the herds used to slumber and where my heart was light,
Where stood the tents of beloved friends and uncles.
This is the fire hole with the pit now deep in sand—
Here so often rested the coffeepots from Damascus!
There they always tied their horses, with white circles round their eyeballs,
And their heads four-cornered.
They departed like a falcon yearning for sudden flight,
Encircling broad ravines, where none can watch its going.

Fig. 6

Chief Rsheyd eben Smeyr

Between Lalum and Shethatha are their nearest camping places,
And their farthest lie where the ostriches are hatched.
If ever you wander into the far country,
Bring tidings to my friends as they dwell among their foes.
Tidings are for men what the best pastures are for camels."

My companions failed to find rain water in the valley of Murra. Bleyhan had admitted his unfamiliarity with this valley while the guide Zeyd, who had boasted that he knew every stone in the region, was totally ignorant. Such a guide I had never met before. Every morning I had to rouse him at least ten times. Still he would not get up until the camels had left for the pastures and the fire was built or until the baggage had been loaded. He never gathered the fuel but sat contentedly by the fire, hunted for lice and warmed his dirty feet. When he saw us preparing to load baggage he would immediately begin to pray, though he prayed at no other time.

About sunset we lost our way while traversing the dry beds of vast rain pools, and had crossed innumerable paths leading to watering places in the west and south and to pastures in the north and east.

RSHEYD EBEN SMEYR

In the morning the air cleared and we perceived black tents of a camp and large herds of camels drinking from a rain pool near by. Turning in that direction we stopped within rifle shot of the rain pool. I despatched Bleyhan and Zeyd with the camels and water bags to water the camels at a rain pool of the Khabari Seykal and to inquire after the whereabouts of Prince Nuri. Should the Prince's

camp be near, they were not to take water; should he be camping far away, however, they were to fill both bags.

When Bleyhan was on his way back we saw from a distance that he had filled both the bags. He had filled them with thin mud. He said that the water in the rain pool was only about eight inches deep and was being drawn upon by several thousands of camels which had trampled in the morass, polluted the water with their excretions, and converted it into thin mud. The whereabouts of Nuri's camp he was not able to ascertain.

"I heard that the Prince was headed for the fort of Burku on the way to the depression of Sirhan," he explained. So it was necessary for us likewise to turn southward.

Our journey from east to west was now terminated and our guide Zeyd, who was to bring us to Dmeyr, was at liberty to return home.

On Tuesday afternoon, December 29, we reached the tent of Rsheyd eben Smeyr, head chief of the Weld Ali, whom I wished to question as to the intentions of Nuri and to consult about a dependable guide. He came out to meet me with a joyful greeting (Fig. 6).

"Allah be praised that I behold you alive and well, O Sheikh Musa! Only a short time ago Nuri received news that you were attacked, robbed and murdered. Some accused the Amarat, others again the Akeydat or Dleym. *Al-hamdu lillah* that it is not so!"

He told me of his return from Damascus twelve days before and said that two days afterward Nuri, persuaded by Nawwaf, had set out toward the oasis of Jowf. Nuri was therefore at least five marches away from us. Should we overtake him and where would that be?

"That only Allah knows, but be sure that He will lead you to him," was the consolation of Rsheyd.

He summoned Mhammad and made him swear to tell truthfully what we lacked in supplies. Finding that we had no flour he ordered our flour sack to be brought and filled it with his own hands.

"Should you still be lacking in anything, O Sheikh Musa, say so," he admonished me. "Cast off your modesty! All that is mine is yours also."

"Your goodness, O Rsheyd, gladdens me," I responded, "and gratitude towards you has taken root deep in my heart. How could I hesitate to accept things from Sheikh Rsheyd whose bounty is known in the west and in the east, both among settlers and among the nomads of the wide desert?"

To this the gathering in the tent nodded in assent, and each guest, taking hold of his shirt at the breast with two fingers and flapping it, mumbled, "I believe you, I believe you."

Late in the night there came to Rsheyd four warriors of the Eshajea clan, who said they had undertaken a robbing raid against the Fedan. Upon their return they had found that their families had gone south with Nuri and they were now hurrying to overtake them. They said they had stopped at Rsheyd's camp in quest of others who might likewise be bound south. Rsheyd told them promptly that they might travel with us as we were going to Nuri too and were in search of a guide or companions.

The Eshajea informed Rsheyd that, three days before, a troop of four hundred fighters of the Fedan and Amarat had been seen by the wells of Eleyyaniyye and, when informed of the appearance south and southwest of Rsheyd's camp of an unknown rider sighted by the herds-

men, they declared that he was doubtless a spy of that belligerent horde bent on attack.

Rsheyd decided to transfer the camp to the north and unite with another clan in order to oppose the onslaught more effectively. Therefore he ordered the tents to be folded early in the morning and despatched north with the herds.

Having heard from him of the visit of the Eshajea, I sent Mhammad to them to arrange the time of our departure. I was so confident that they would appreciate the opportunity of traveling in our company that I was astonished to learn that they would accompany us only on condition that we pay each of them four *mejidiyyat* ($3.60) and that Bleyhan would guarantee that their camels would be restored should we be attacked by the Fedan or by the Amarat. I laughed at this demand, saying that they ought to be glad to be taken along. But both Bleyhan and Mhammad warned me of the perfidy of these four robbers, observing how easily they could plunder us at night and hence how much to our advantage it would be to hire them and insure our belongings. Also the men had four good rifles, which would enable us to defend ourselves better against a small band of robbers. Being well aware of the dangers near the volcanic territory of the Hawran, which is infested by robbers of the Ahali al-Jebel, I empowered Mhammad to offer to each of the Eshajea three *mejidiyyat* ($2.70), payable, however, in Prince Nuri's tent, and to stipulate that they should sustain themselves on their own provisions, drink their own water, and assist us whenever necessary. With our robbers, we planned to set out on Wednesday, December 30, after sunset.

IV. IN THE TRACKS OF NURI TO THE SIRHAN DEPRESSION

A DANGEROUS TRIP

I talked with Rsheyd a long time. He was keenly interested in politics and surprised me with his uncommon knowledge of matters European and Turkish, being versed even in the history of Arabia. Bidding him a cordial farewell, we left the camp, December 30, after sunset and took an east-southeasterly course into the darkening desert.

The journey was full of danger. A strong cavalcade of the enemy had been seen. Should we encounter it?

"We beseech Thy protection; give us Thy veil, O Lord!" exclaimed Bleyhan.

Like ghosts we moved on over the rolling plain. About ten o'clock we sighted in a yellowish, glistening, dried-up rain pool the trail of hostile riders. Suddenly we heard the neighing of a stallion approaching a mare. *Sitrak ya rabb!* Had one of our camels emitted a sound at that instant we should have been lost. Several moments of extreme suspense followed. The neighing was heard from the west, which indicated that the enemy was behind us; therefore we must forge quickly ahead.

Everything was level and open, and the eye carried far. Had we passed here in daylight the enemy would surely have seen us. Even as it was, the marauders of the Ahali al-Jebel might attack us at any moment, for they were criss-crossing the territory we were traversing, either

setting out in lust of booty or returning with their spoils.

We were nearing the extensive basin of Jweyf, which is hedged in by white limestone cliffs sixty to eighty feet high and contains two wells much favored by marauding bands. Two of our companions turned their sheepskin coats inside out in order that the white wool might make them less visible and, with their rifles loaded, went out to reconnoiter while we kept on through the bottom of a shallow valley that terminates in Jweyf. Presently, at a signal from our spies, I followed them with the utmost caution to a slight elevation and, lying flat on my stomach after their example, surveyed the entire landscape through binoculars but discovered nothing suspicious. Then we went over to the next summit and the next and the next, scrutinizing the country from each. While I lay behind piles of stones watching the terrain for any foe that might otherwise take us unaware and Tuman sat near drawing a map, Bleyhan and the others reached the wells, watered the camels, washed out the bags, and filled them with the salty water.

THE TRACKS OF NURI

New Year's Day, 1909! All of us longed for fresh water, as the water drawn at Jweyf was unfit to drink. All of us, men and animals alike, were troubled with intestinal upsets. My companions prevailed upon me to seek water to the southeast at Hefna instead of at Sirhan. They insisted on our way that the south was really the southeast so that we finally arrived at the channel of Minkat instead of at Hefna, with the somber wall of the lava district on our right. I was satisfied, however, as thus we had come nearer to the depression of Sirhan.

In the morning we reached a high heap of stones upon a ridge. We hid our camels in the valley and climbed up to make observations, but now I was looking not so much for enemies as for the camels and fires of our friends. It was just possible that Nuri was camping somewhere to the southeast, but nowhere could I see indications of this.

After a long march we saw the first traces of our hoped-for friends in signs that a great number of camels had gone from the northwest to the southeast and had again returned to the northwest, or vice-versa. It was evident that they had gone from some camp to the watering places. Where was the camp and where the water holes? My escorts asserted that the camp was certainly situated at the left, therefore to the southeast, but I held that the site of the camp was at our right, therefore westward; otherwise we should already have noted the trail of the migrating herds and riders on our way from Jweyf, whereas up to the present time we had not crossed any such traces. From all this I deduced that the main body of the migrating Rwala remained west of our course and that Prince Nuri had despatched only a part of his herds to the watering places in the southeast. My associates refused to believe this and insisted on going to the southeast; hence I declared that as the supply of salt water from Jweyf was sufficient for only two more days it was imperative that we replenish it in the depression of Sirhan before that time elapsed. I said I knew that we should certainly reach these wells in two days' time, whereas we were not at all sure of finding water in any rain pool or rain hollow to the southeast and we might not meet our friends within the two days. To these valid arguments my associates had to yield.

Great, then, was our rejoicing when soon afterward we

came upon the trail of the migrating Rwala. They were going in the same direction that we were. We could distinguish quite clearly where the Prince had trodden, surrounded by riders upon horses, and we followed in his tracks.

But we lost the tracks of our friends on the rocky ledges of a low slope and so headed straight southward, assuming that Prince Nuri would likewise be compelled by lack of water to hasten to the depression of Sirhan. We forced our camels to a speedy march, lying down only before midnight.

The next day we came to a lava spur and followed a narrow path between large and small chips of lava with sharp edges, and here in a few minutes we recovered the trail of our friends.

From the top of the lava ridge we beheld before us an extraordinary picture. The western volcanic region of Shama looked like a huge scale-covered dragon lying immovable in repose. His head, the immense volcano of Jeteb, his scales and his vertebræ, the volcanoes Tleylat as-Sakkar, protruded cold and still. His countless feet and shoulders stretched far into the gray eastern desert, and in his dying gasps his claws, the scattered volcanoes to the east and south, parallel to the lava ridges, buried themselves deep into the level plain. Now the dragon was dead; but when he was alive his vertebræ, head, and claws had emitted fire, and his flaming shoulders and glowing feet had burned their way deeper into the trembling plain. . . .

Among the somber lava ridges were scattered yellowish tracts resembling huge copper platters with decorated rims. These were the *khabari*, or rain pools, at the brims of which the masses of lava ceased as abruptly as if cut

off by a human hand. When these *khabari* are filled with water and wreathed with fresh vegetation they must look superb.

Before noon we came to the enormous Khabra Azaman. Our *sluki* Kattaf had disappeared. When we reached the southern brim of the *khabra* we waited for him for nearly three hours but he did not turn up. Perhaps he had lost our scent or been killed by a wild animal. Greyhounds of the *sluki* breed have an undeveloped sense of smell: they are incapable of following a rider's scent. They follow him as long as they can see him but the moment he passes out of sight they stop, look about for him, and appear not to know what to do until they catch a glimpse of him again. I had often thrown them pieces of flesh and bones and watched them go past the food two or three times without finding it. In order to find food they would have to see it. At night Kattaf would crawl into a waterproof sack and would not come out until we had built a fire. Then he would lazily sit down and warm himself. As a watchdog a *sluki* is absolutely unreliable.

THE HISTORIC WELLS OF KERAZHER

In the morning, January 4, we crossed many grim ridges. As a rule they are in almost parallel alignment from the northwest to the southeast, thus resembling a large camp of Bedouins or the huge piles of coal that we are accustomed to see at our railroad stations. My escorts pointed out to me the black peak of Mahat rising above the wells of Kerazher, but what a distance still intervened between us and that peak! Serrated ridge after serrated ridge loomed ahead of us.

Finally, shortly before noon, we reached the water in the wells of Kerazher (Fig. 7). They were entirely deserted; a few ravens circled above them. Kerazher has over twenty wells. Some of the wells are only one foot deep, others two and a half feet. The water has a salty flavor. East of the wells are two palmettos—a sure proof that the whole basin could be changed into a date palm garden.

Kerazher is a place mentioned in the Bible. The Midianites together with various Ishmaelite tribes undertook raids into Palestine and harassed the Israelites, to whom God sent a protector in Gideon. Having routed the strange raiders in the plain of Jezreel, Gideon pursued them across the Jordan and to the eastern desert. The Midianites and their allies fled along the ancient Road of the Nomads leading through the Sirhan depression. They did not encamp until they reached Karkor (Kerazher) and here they hoped to rest in safety. They did not foresee that the Israelites would pursue them so far beyond the Israelite frontiers; but they were mistaken. Gideon took their camp by surprise and destroyed them nearly all.

Arabic authors narrating the first Moslem conquests in Syria knew of Keraker (in dialect Kerazher), as well as of Swa or Sab Biyar. Both these places were in the year 634 visited by the Moslem commander, Khaled ibn al-Walid, when he hastened from Irak (Babylonia) to the assistance of the Moslems fighting in Syria. Khaled followed the great transport road via Duma, or Jowf of to-day. He found water every day, either in spring-water wells or in artificial reservoirs. Many of these wells are about three hundred feet deep and are very old. The reservoirs, mere rain pools, are very numerous and in the vicinity of nearly all of them are the remains of ancient buildings.

Khaled could go to the oasis of Duma without great peril, for the oasis already belonged to the Moslems. There he could supply himself for the rest of his journey and from there he could march northwest over a very old road that led through the depression of Sirhan to the southern gate at the city of Bosra, and on to Syria.

The Bedouins know two gates that lead from inner Arabia to Syria; the southern one at Bosra, and the northern at the settlement of Dmeyr.

The horses of the nomads can hold out as long as forty-eight hours without a drink, and while Khaled was marching over the usual transport road from Hira via the oasis of Duma and on as far as Keraker, he came to a watering place for his horses every second day.

Every watering place in the desert in a level or undulating region has its mark. These are generally natural eminences upon which are heaped piles of stones. Without such cairns in the desert no one could find his way.

However, after leaving this road at Keraker with one of the professional guides that clustered then as they do to-day about the commercial centers, and heading for Swa, it became necessary to transport water for the horses as well as for the men. Since it was impossible to get the necessary bags at Keraker, the fat old camels were made to serve as living reservoirs.

A strong, fat camel coaxed to drink can hold as much as sixty or seventy quarts of water. If she is prevented from grazing and ruminating, she will hold the water in her paunch for several days. If she is slaughtered the water which is forced out of the paunch will settle in a few hours and become fit for men and animals to drink. The meat of such slaughtered camels provides food for the travelers. The stronger, the fatter, and the larger the

camel, the more water she will imbibe and the longer she will be able to survive without grazing. Khaled, of course, had many camels which were marked for butchering in order that the army might have fresh meat. He was advised by Rafe, the guide, to use these camels as living bags of water for the horses.

Rafe imitated the Bedouins. When a Bedouin wants to stimulate a camel's thirst, he takes her near a watering place, binds her, pours water into the receptacle from which the camel is wont to drink, slaps the water with his palm, and coaxes the camel to drink by short songs and a peculiar smacking. The camel sees and hears, but cannot reach the water. In her craving for the water she pricks up her ears. Many riding camels are trained to tell from these motions and sounds that they are to go upon a distant journey through the arid desert and to drink more greedily. If they are bound and hear the familiar smacking and songs, they prick up their ears in the direction of the water and manifest their craving by a peculiarly beseeching whine. The water is so near, the journey before them so long, and they cannot have water! When the rider does take off their shackles they run to the receptacle and drink in long, deep gulps. The rider adds water as long as they drink. Then he takes them away from the watering place and lets them graze. An hour later he drives them back to the water, binds them, tantalizes them, and excites such a thirst in them that they quiver. Then he lets them drink for a second time. In this manner every strong camel can be forced to drink sixty or seventy quarts. If the water they have drunk is to be used by men or animals, their mouths are tied to prevent their grazing and ruminating and thus mixing the water in their paunches with food. To endure any protracted journey without food, a camel must

be strong and her hump, on which she lives, must be high and fatty. After several days of meager pasture the hump shrinks and when it has disappeared the animal is generally so weak that she cannot rise with load or rider.

Such living water bags Khaled drove before his army on his memorable march from Keraker to Swa or Sab Biyar.

We intended to water our camels in Kerazher, fill our water bags, and then go on. But whither? Where were our friends? We had gone but a little north of the wells when I discovered fresh tracks of many horses pointing westward and soon afterwards the site of a camp—a pretty good sign that our friends had been lodging here and had proceeded to the west. A man appeared unexpectedly from behind a rocky spur. Allah be praised, he was a Rweyli, hence a friend. He told us the glad news that Prince Nuri was encamped in the district of Biz on the western edge of the depression of Sirhan.

"*Al-hamdu lillah!* Allah be praised!" we exclaimed.

Leaving the wells shortly after noon and following the horse tracks, we sang:

> "O Lord of the stairs which lead up to the heights,
> O Allah! Forgiver, grant our prayers.
> With the first she-camel, the last one too,
> Let luck uplift itself—Lord of the stairs!"

From a high elevation we sighted herds at pasture and a huge camp in the west. I decided to enter it at its center. Beneath us spread the depression of Sirhan, enclosed by precipitous slopes that were dark to the east and white to the west. Between these glistened broad, almost massive areas of white salt, from which protruded grayish, isolated hillocks. Above the entire depression hung a dense

veil of dust and sand. After noon, January 4, we were at its fringe.

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A PLEASANT RETURN

The camels plodded often up to their knees in the salt marsh. Reaching the first tents we learned that the tent of Prince Nuri stood at the southeastern edge of the camp, whither we turned, receiving pleasant greetings on our way. We hastened on towards the large fire which I knew was flaming inside the Prince's tent. At last I sighted the roof of my own tent and presently, stepping over several ropes, I dismounted at home, among my camels and before my tent. I had been absent thirty-one days. Immediately I was surrounded and warmly embraced, kissed, and welcomed. The Prince thanked Allah for having conducted me back alive and well; Nawwaf pressed my hand and inquired the reason of my long absence; Saud, Mezhhem, Adhub, Mindil, Hmar, and all my friends, old and young, clasped my hand. They had received news, purporting to be authoritative, that I had fallen near the Euphrates in a battle with the Dleym. Much affected, I thanked them all and retired to the tent of the Prince to greet him and thank him for protecting my friends and property in my absence.

All the guests came to see me one after another, touched my hand, and welcomed the Sheikh Musa. The Prince had intended to migrate the following day; since I had returned, however, he announced that we would wait another day, "that the Sheikh Musa might rest."

After I went back to my tent I helped Tuman calculate the latitude. Naser told me that the Prince and Nawwaf had come to the tent two or three times every night

to urge him to vigilance. Whenever they changed the camp they allotted him two pack camels and ordered the slave Hmar to assist him with the loading and unloading. But he also had bad news in store for me. In our absence our sturdiest camel, for which I had paid ninety *mejidiyyat* ($81), had died of a malady known as *teyr*. Her nerves became paralyzed, he said, and she could not stand up the second day and died four days later. Nuri assured me that he had summoned all the veterinarians and that they had used every means to save her, but to no avail.

Early in the morning Nawwaf came in. Then I sent for the elderly negro, Hmar, who was the most proficient master of topography in northern Arabia and was also well acquainted with the northern portion of Nejd. Before noon I was inundated with visitors.

Nuri spent most of the afternoon with me hearing all the particulars about my journey. When I came to the depression of Sirhan in my narrative, I requested him to draw in the sand all the locations, wells, heights, and valleys, situated east and west of this depression, and he willingly complied.

IN THE SIRHAN DEPRESSION

Next morning the tents were loaded. I was sorry to leave the camp site at Biz so soon, for the Prince's tent and mine stood in the shade of wide-spreading *tarfa* trees (*tamarix*), the nearest neighborhood was covered with the verdant green of grass, and the stiff *halfa*[1] rushes east and west of the tents made such a dense thicket that the camels could hardly pass through. Water was plentiful, too, springing

[1] *Imperata cylindrica*, L.

out at many places and flowing in short rivulets, and it tasted but slightly of salt; there was no pasture for the camels, however, so we had to go elsewhere.

The Prince invited me to keep him company on the journey. He led me to a small fire some distance from his tent, where his slave was preparing sweet black coffee in my pot. His riding camel was kneeling beyond the fire, and he forced my camel to kneel there too. Beside the fire a wooden stand about twelve inches high was driven into the sand and upon it sat a falcon with a red cap on its head. When the slaves had finished loading all the stores and the Prince's tent, the scribe brought forward a war mare and tied it by the rein to the camel's saddle girth, while Nuri took the stand with the falcon, put the bird on the back of the camel's saddle, and thrust the stand into the saddle bag.

We proceeded at a swift pace southeastward. Soon we outran all the loaded camels and, accompanied by four slaves and the scribe riding behind, we headed the migrating tribe. A strange dispensation of Allah, for a Bedouin prince to be riding beside a Czech in the depression of Sirhan at the head of a big tribe! When I reminded the Prince of this, he replied:

"Allah has willed it. I never thought I should make friends with a man whose blood is not mine. Do not forget me, Musa, when you ride at the head of your tribe!"

On our way we came to the remnant of a limestone hillock. Wishing to photograph this witness of advanced erosion, I asked the Prince to stop, which he willingly did (Fig. 5). Meantime Nawwaf with his party had caught up with us, and we lingered a while. Hardly were we again in the saddle when a hare darted out from under a bush near by. Instantly the Prince's hound, a *sluki*, was after

Fig. 7

At the wells of Kerazher

Fig. 8

At the wells of Méyseri

Fig. 9

In the plain of Khunfa

him, and instantly too the Prince untied the falcon's cap, uncoupled the chain from a leather leash, and released the bird with the leash into the air. The falcon circled once, sighted the *sluki* and the hare, swooped down upon the hare, pecked him, rose in the air, plunged again, pecked another time, and the prey lay prostrate. Then the Prince upon his camel rushed up to the hare, chased the hound away from it, cut its throat, and swinging it aloft tried to entice the falcon back to him. The bird circled a while in the air, then flew down to the Prince and sat upon his hand, waiting for him to tie it, cover its head with the cap, and put it on the camel. A little while afterwards Nawwaf's falcon also hunted down a hare which Nawwaf offered to me; but I declined it asking that he have it prepared and then invite me to supper. I had received a *habara* (bustard) from Trad, a son of Sattam, and therefore had plenty of fresh meat for myself.

Shortly after noon we reached the springs, Uyun Edhwanat, where we encamped upon a sandy height that rises out of a marsh. In the evening Nawwaf came to take me into the Prince's tent where we were to have the hares for supper. The Prince sat beside me on his left heel and tossed me pieces of the meat. When I urged him not to forget himself since he, as our head, must keep strong in order to take care of us all, he replied that he cared most for his best freebooter, that is, his brother Musa. He called my scientific expeditions raids.

We were to move on again the next day, but when I happened to say that I had celebrated neither the holidays of my tribe nor that of my friends of the desert, the *zahiyye* (commemoration of the faithful departed of the last year), the Prince instantly announced that we would celebrate them together and for that reason would remain

over the morrow at the same camping place. That morning, before dawn, he rode out with Saud into the eastern range to hunt and at the same time to look for pasture. When he returned in the afternoon he had it announced in camp that we should remain there the following day because of an abundance of pasture to the east.

Meantime I had been sketching a map of the regions east of the Hawran as far as the Euphrates and the city of Nejef on the east, and south to Jowf, recording upon it the names of all the locations I had learned on my last expedition as well as at Prince Nuri's camp. Afterwards Tuman was to redraw it and make adjustments of the distances and directions. This sketch afforded me an excellent aid in my topographical inquiries made in camp as well on the march. In the level desert, bare of mountain ranges, prominent heights, or deep valleys, the investigator often lacks a base or starting point from which to inquire further after topographical designations; and the guide often forgets to remind him that there, in the vast level stretch, may be located a well, a rain pool, etc., or that this or that depression or basin has a particular name of its own. Through this sketch I was enabled to participate in conversations about the camping or watering places of various tribes and about the directions of roads. I also learned the names of new places, the situation of which I could ascertain with greater ease and later verify on my own expeditions. In this manner I came to be independent of the good or ill will of my guides and could determine the truth in what they said.

Desiring to finish my improvised sketch that day, I worked until late at night; hence Nawwaf, who came for a chat, left early. I paused in the work only for a short while after noon when I received a visit from Sayer eben

Burman who commanded the raiding detachment of the Freje that had robbed us. While telling Nawwaf what had happened, I asked him whether I should present Sayer with a gift for having compelled his associates to restore the stolen articles.

"O brother," he answered, "Sayer forced them to do it because of fear of my father. Whether you should give him anything or not, by Allah, I shall not decide. Your thought is inspired by Allah, and it is a sin to deprive anyone of a gift."

Sayer offered himself as a guide or companion on my next expedition; but convincing myself that his knowledge of topography was poor, I presented him with an *aba* (mantle) with which he left, expressing his thanks.

Early Saturday morning, January 9, I was aroused by the groaning of uncomfortable pack camels that signified our departure. Nawwaf stopped for me and we proceeded along a swampy depression to the southeast.

Some minutes later two *habari* birds rose heavily to the south and Nawwaf darted forward to hunt them down with his falcon.

The depression of Sirhan, upon the western fringe of which we were traveling, is here about five miles wide from west to east; on the east it is enclosed by the spurs of the lava area of Misma, on the west by a slope rising about sixty feet to the surface of an undulating limestone upland. The Prince selected a new camp site at the wells of Jemajem.

HUNTING FALCONS

The Rwala buy falcons from the settlers in Sheikh Miskin and Rheybe. They hold that the best hunting falcon

is reddish-brown with many white spots on its tail, though dark brown and black falcons are also good for hunting.

The falcon is an extraordinary bird. It is said that the young falcon remains forty days in embryo, forty days before it is hatched from the egg, and yet another forty days must pass before it shows whether it will fly or not. So long as the female lays eggs and sits on them she takes no responsibility about food. The male provides both for the female and the young. It brings home *habari* birds and hares. The female takes no notice of the young, even though one fall and cheep some feet below the nest. A hard time begins if the male bird dies. The female is lucky if she can but supply the young and herself with jerboas and mice, although these are not particularly good for them.

Settlers searching for young consider especially whether both parents are alive and they take the young out as soon as these are able to feed themselves. They feed them until they are fully developed, whereupon they sell them to the Bedouins. It is hard, troublesome work; the settlers prefer to catch full-grown falcons.

With the aid of a raven, some feathers, and a pigeon tied to a cord near a hidden net, the falcon hunter lures the falcon from the sky. He then releases the net by means of the string, catches the falcon and immediately sews up its eyelids. After three or four days the falcon has become a little tame and the stitches may be undone. The falcon hunter sells untrained falcons for from eight to twenty *mejidiyyat* ($7.20-$18.00) each.

The Bedouin has to train the falcon himself. The chiefs generally have a slave who trains falcons for them and also hunts with them. If the chiefs wish to hunt, they must accustom the birds to themselves or they will not

return to them from the booty. The falconer needs a wooden stand about two feet high, provided with an iron spike below and covered with leather above. Upon this stand the falcon lives. On each foot it has a leather loop with a chain passing through it to about halfway down the stand. The falcon can rise a little but it cannot fly away. On its head the falcon wears a small leather helmet which can be drawn down over its eyes and fastened under its beak around its neck, so that the bird cannot throw it off with its claw.

Shortly before sunset the falconer puts a coarse leather gauntlet on his right hand, removes the chain from the loops, draws a long thin cord through them, takes the falcon on his right hand, keeps calling its name, and swings it to and fro, endeavoring to make it fly. The falcon rises and circles above the falconer. He fastens the other end of the cord to a firmly fixed peg, takes a small riding bag in his left hand and a piece of meat in his right hand, and with this he beckons to the falcon, calling it by name. If the falcon does not clutch, he softly treads on the rope until the bird finally dashes upon the meat. When the falcon, after a few days of training, returns of its own accord, he lets it go entirely free. Then he obtains a hare, which has either been wounded by a shot or has one leg broken, and he sets the falcon and a greyhound on to it. If the falcon catches it, he lets it have it all.

When the falcon has caught and devoured several wounded hares with the help of the greyhound the falconer goes out hunting with it. He fastens it on a small chain behind the saddle of the camel, takes a riding bag with him, calls the greyhound, and rides out beyond the camp. When the greyhound raises a hare or a *habara* bird, the hunter unties the falcon, takes it on his right hand,

rides up at a trot behind the dog, and sets the bird on the hunted animal. It catches the *habara* bird immediately, but the hare usually escapes its beak. If the falcon swoops down upon the hare and succeeds in plunging its talons into the hare's back, the falconer rides up at full speed behind it, covers it and its prey with his cloak, slaps the bird on the back, shouting *kish kish*, and endeavors to remove it. The falcon receives its share of the prey only inside the tent, never on the open plain.

A well-trained falcon can catch as many as ten *habari* and twenty hares a day if there is an abundance of game.

But the falcons stay with the Rwala hardly half a year. They do not perish, but they do not return. During the rainy season, especially when it is cold, the falcon grows restless and disobedient. The most reliable male gets lost when he meets a wild female. Tame female falcons are more faithful, but even they are off and away when they sight a wild hunting falcon.

"Oh, had I a hound for the chase! And a hunting falcon!
And a little camel! We should place a saddle upon it—
We should ride 'tween the troop of the chief and the migrating tribe—
We should call to the hound. We should call, and the falcon would hunt.

The hunting falcon, O Kzeyi! has refused the chase,
Alas, for the one which refused to hunt the *habara!*
I changed it from hand to hand, yet 'twas like a falcon
Feeding on frogs; a sluggard, that cannot be trained.

Of our falcon so winsome and ever capturing booty,
By Allah Himself! there is no trace to follow:
It paired with a female falcon, hardy and barren,
Her marrow, two summers, two winters old, in her feet."

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"IS THAT LIFE?"

THE next day the chiefs of the settlements of Ethra and Chaf came to greet the Prince and render him tribute. A few settlers drove five camels loaded with dates before them. In these settlements the princely family of Shalan owned more than five hundred date trees, which the settlers leased for one-fifth of the net profits. Of the current year's fifth they now brought to the Prince one camel-load of dates weighing 375 pounds, and to the family of the deceased Prince Sattam they brought four camel-loads of about the same weight each. The family of Sattam—or, as it is commonly called, the family of Turkiyye—is richer than the family of Nuri, because it owns more camels, horses, and slaves; for Sattam had been a prudent man who provided for the welfare of his progeny.

On Monday Nawwaf went with many fighters to protect the herds of camels at pasture in the southwest. As the herds were to stay there over night, I was thus free for two days to devote myself to my writing without interruption. The courier, sent out to Jowf the week before, arrived with letters, but I did not examine them until I had finished my topographical account.

Nawwaf returned with the report that the pasturage in the southwest was so poor that we should be compelled to search elsewhere. Poor Arabs! Four long months they had been waiting for abundant rain. Hmar avowed that he had no recollection of another such unfavorable season in thirty years.

I delved into work early in the morning in order to finish the account of my recent trip before Nawwaf should

come in. When he came he talked about the oasis of Jowf, which he said was enshrined deep in his heart.

"Musa, why, with the help of Allah, could I not found a dominion there like that which Eben Rashid has founded? If I took possession of the oasis of Jowf, I could establish myself there with a picked band and, by prudent words, with arms and gold, I could subjugate in a short time the entire northern portion of Arabia."

After another interruption, I began to write again, for I could not afford to waste even an hour. I had to explore a vast territory, observe the habits, customs, lore, etc., of the Rwala, and collect the greatest possible number of plants. The Prince understood partly at least the aim of my journey and likewise respected my desire for seclusion to write and would not allow the young chiefs to disturb me. In the afternoon I heard a woman say to Naser:

"Your master, the Sheikh Musa, is nowhere to be seen. He must be either on a raid or sitting in his tent and writing. Is that life?"

Thursday morning I called in the negro Hmar and sketched a map from his description of the territory west of Jowf. Behind my tent the chief's boys had put up a target and were amusing themselves with a shooting match.

Friday was migration day. We trod over the lava stones which are scattered to a great distance into the depression of Sirhan. A nose of the range of Misma loomed up conspicuously with both its higher elevations clearly visible, the southern resembling a camel saddle, the northern a sharp horn.

On the new camping ground I discharged my servant Bleyhan. He had become lazy, troublesome and impudent, so I paid him his wages plus eight *mejidiyyat* extra,

thanked him and wished him a happy journey to his folk. That very evening he left me and spent the night in another tent.

On Saturday we moved again. We pushed through a salt marsh with low palm brush here and there, but our progress was slow and we could not make camp until late at night. The next day I was busy attending the sick and rewrapping supplies.

On Monday we came to the shallow wells of Harma where all, even the Prince, encamped without tents among the supplies.

The next morning the herdsman Mufazzi aroused me to report the disappearance of our best-natured riding camel, the riding saddle, the leather water bag and the canvas bucket, a tin ladle, and a rope about forty yards long. Of course Bleyhan was the thief for he too had disappeared. As he was familiar with my things and well-known as my servant, it was easy for him to saddle my camel at leisure, fill the water bag at the nearest well and escape. By the tracks I gauged the time of his departure as before midnight. Some of the men wanted to pursue him but the Prince and I declined. He had long since reached the rugged volcanic district. Thus for a time the camel was lost to me, but not permanently; for restitution would have to be made by the head chief Ghathwan eben Mershed, to whom Bleyhan was subject and who had vouched for him. As we did not move that day, I sketched a map of the territory north and south of Teyma.

On Wednesday, January 22, we set out shortly before nine, heading southeasterly. Toward evening there was such intense lightning in the southeast that the poor Arabs cherished hopes of fresh rain water and verdant pastures. In the depression of Sirhan all the water savors of salt

and the pastures are insufficient. The plants are covered with a layer of salt and the camels have to be watered as often as every third day. Walking in the depression of Sirhan is difficult for man and beast, for the ground is overlaid with a crust of salt one third to two inches thick, beneath which there is often a deposit of lime dust or sand four to eight inches deep into which men and animals sink at every step.

We were too tired to move the next day. Nawwaf was consumed with a flaming desire to reach Jowf at the earliest possible moment and to capture the city and the northern half of the former domain of Eben Rashid; but his father checked him. The latter was waiting for messages from Eben Saud who was said to be dwelling in Kasim.

KNOTTY PROBLEMS

Lately I had been discussing with the Prince my wish to enter the region of the oasis of Teyma upon my next expedition. He did not welcome the idea. Realizing at length, however, that I could not wait for him and still have time to explore the territory to the east that belonged to the tribes of the Amarat and Dahamshe, he decreed that I should be escorted upon my expedition by the negro Freyh, who had joined him from Nejd only two years before and who had visited Teyma several times in his previous service under Eben Rashid.

The following day we were again on the march. At the outset I rode with a group of youthful warriors but later the Prince invited me to accompany him. We discussed the contemplated occupation of Jowf and the possible complications that might arise in connection with it. I

urged the Prince to offer peace to the Amarat and Dahamshe tribes and to ally himself with all his kinsmen, the Aneze, against his ancient enemy, Eben Rashid.

"You, the Aneze, will attack Eben Rashid from the north and east; Eben Saud, your fellow tribesman, will press him from the south; and he will either have to acknowledge your supremacy or migrate to the Hejaz. I am sure that those Shammar clans who camp along the southern border of your territory will join you and help you against him, and the settlers in the oasis of Jowf—supporters of Eben Rashid—will not be able to resist."

"Your counsel, brother, is good and I shall do my best to follow it. I am ready to make friends with the Amarat and the Dahamshe immediately, but my people are angry with them, insisting that they are faithless and flee with booty across the Euphrates only to be in the reach of the Turkish Government. With Eben Saud I am united by friendship; he sends letters to me and I to him. It is a curious situation. Eben Saud seeks any pretext for continuing the fight with Eben Rashid. Owing to the maneuvers in his own behalf of the minister Eben Subhan, the Eben Rashid family is divided against itself. Feysal of the Eben Rashid family, with other relatives who were driven out by the minister Eben Subhan, has sought refuge with the traditional enemy, Eben Saud, and is urging him to fight the minister, who really holds sway instead of the minor Prince Eben Rashid. Eben Saud is hampered by the Turkish garrisons in the coastal zone of Hasa and by lack of free access to the sea."

"Is there any order to-day in the oasis of Jowf?"

"No. When Feysal, last vice-regent there of Eben Rashid, was driven out, or rather fled in fear of being killed, Eben Subhan sent another governor. The followers

of Feysal remain faithful to their former lord and, not wanting to submit to the new governor, have invited me to take possession of the oasis. This I will do and thereby regain for my kin and my tribe the property which Eben Rashid took from us sixty years ago, but blood—and much of it—will be shed. The followers of Eben Subhan and the minor Prince Eben Rashid, on the other hand, took refuge in the castle of Mared and we have not the guns necessary for taking it and driving out the garrison. The settlements of Kara and Tyer will go with us, but more than half of the inhabitants of Skaka will be against us. There will ensue fights between the settlers and they are more cruel than we. Believe me, brother, I am afraid to take the responsibility lest Allah demand of me the blood that will be shed. This is why I cannot make any decision and why I oppose Nawwaf."

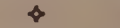
"I understand, Nuri, your fears, but if the settlers in Jowf wage war to-day against each other they will not cease until someone stronger forces them to peace. Wait and see. If Eben Rashid will not despatch a strong army to Jowf to renew peace, do it yourself. You will save many lives, preserve large property, and return to your tribe what has belonged to it for many centuries. Should you interfere you would have to do so with full strength. Allah will help you."

During our discussion we came to the wells of Meyseri, where stood two palm trees (Fig. 8). The Prince watered his camel and his horse from my canvas bucket which was in great demand.

After noon on Friday, January 22, we pitched our tents at the well of Nbaj and prepared the supplies for my next expedition. I took provisions for six persons for thirty to thirty-five days and divided them on five camels.

The negro Freyh, who was to accompany me as a visible mark that I was traveling before Nuri's countenance, was to ride his own beast and, like Mhammad, he was to lead by a rein a camel bearing a load. I went to bid farewell to the Prince and found him in front of his tent, squatting among the camels and issuing important orders to two Bedouins. As soon as he dismissed them they swung upon their mounts and presently disappeared beyond a slope that hedged the camp on the east. They could not trifle with time, for they had orders to reach Jowf before dawn on the morrow and to report to the Prince the following day; and Jowf was ninety miles away. The Prince had despatched two couriers so that, in the event of a mishap to one of them, his message would be delivered by the other.

V. ON THE ROADS OF DEATH



THE MOURNFUL HILLS OF BSAYTA

The Prince accompanied me to my tent.

"Brother," he said, "you will follow the roads of death where not only bands of marauders but also single robbers lurk who rob and kill as well. My protection will be of no avail, for nobody will ever learn who your murderers have been. In the neighborhood of Teyma outlaws of different tribes are roving; and nearly all of them are our enemies. Therefore be on the alert and return to your friends alive and well."

We left Nbaj on Saturday, January 23, and rode along the southern fringe of the Sirhan depression toward the southeast. In the afternoon we stopped near a rugged sandy hill at the base of which the small oasis of Nabch ash-Sherzhi is situated in the shade of several palm trees. There is a little half-ruined deserted stone farm there. The whole neighborhood could be changed into a garden in which at least five thousand date palms would bear fruit if this fruit and the lives of the settlers could be made secure.

We rode on for several days without incident, starting often before sunrise.

Our negro Freyh raised sundry objections to early rising: camels need an absolute rest; so do travelers themselves; it is dangerous to kindle fires in the darkness of night along paths of blood and roads of death. True enough, but he failed to mention that Freyh himself loved

not the acute cold that comes before dawn but the warm comfort of his bed!

We stopped at the wells of Shghar and the wells of Sbayha, where a kind of *ghaza*[1] grows that is deadly to camels, and passed on through the desolate plain of Bsayta, where the tiny *semh*[2] plants grow only after the winter rains. This plant the Bedouins use as a substitute for flour, threshing it with heavy sticks, wringing it, and thus separating the pure brown seeds.

This desolate plain has been evolved by ceaseless erosion through countless centuries. Long ago it was covered with hills of sandstone but the wind, rain, and frost gnawed at the surface of the hills until there remained only the hard cores which could not be eaten away and were repeatedly re-covered by the ever-shifting sand. Thus were formed the sandy hills which, scattered over the plain, give it the mournful aspect noted by Arabian poets. According to them Bsayta is a plain covered with small pebbles of various shapes and uninhabitable because devoid of water. As the poet Mutanabbi was fleeing from Egypt to Irak, his slave is said to have seen in this plain a strange bull, or antelope, which he took for the tower of a mosque; another traveler had seen an ostrich and called it a palm. They could easily be mistaken when the hot air was quivering with dust veils.

We encamped one night in the dale of Jemal near a band of migrating Arabs, subjects of Eben Jandal. The chief, Sayyah eben Jandal, invited me to his tent. He had sworn vengeance on Nuri because of the assassination of

[1] A tree-like bush with long, flexible boughs and thin needle-shaped leaves.

[2] *Mesembryanthemum Forskahlei*, Hochst.; *Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum*, L.; a low, sappy annual with green, fleshy leaves and small green flowers.

Fahad. He was so gratified when I confirmed him in the opinion that Jowf—the settlement though not the whole oasis—had formerly obeyed his family and was still rightly called Dumat al-Jandaliyye, that he offered me his friendship and a supper of dates and canned meat which he selected and kneaded and put into my hand. He also urged me to stay the following day, when there would be the examination of his new baby boy, as the dinner is called to which all the kinswomen are invited.

A woman after confinement lives just as before the delivery with no change in her diet. No animal is sacrificed or slaughtered at the birth of a boy or girl. For seven days after its birth the child is bathed in camel's urine and rubbed with salt. On either the tenth, twentieth, or fortieth day eatables are gathered by the female relatives of the confined woman and a dinner is prepared to which not only all the women but also some men from the camp are invited to examine the child. After the dinner the mother visits all her relatives with the child and collects gifts for it. Everybody presents something, often a young camel or a colt, and the gifts remain the child's property.

After her return to the tent the mother announces the child's name to the relatives. It is her privilege. Sometimes she selects a name without much thought; at other times, under some special influence. Prince Nuri's wife gave birth to a boy when camping near the castle of Khafaji and named the boy Khafaji. Another woman was delivered during a heavy rain and called her little son Matar, Rain. Kurdi's wife prayed to Allah for a boy and when the prayer was granted she named the baby Raja, meaning "The Granting of Favor." The wife of Awde al-Kwechbi had a very painful delivery and therefore

Fig. 10

A dry ghaza bush in the Nefud

Fig. 11

A sand pit in the Nefud

said: "You shall be called Asir, Born in Pain." Another woman, filled with wrath because her husband had just taken a second wife, named her son Muriz, Enraging. The wife of the slave Hmar received a beating from her husband shortly before a son was born to her and, still being angry with him, she called the boy Zaal, Anger. When delivered of a girl a little later she said: "Your father's name is Hmar, Donkey, so you shall be called Bakara, Cow." There is no beast nor plant after which a child may not be named.

A DOG'S TRYST

We proceeded on our way along the western fringe of the Nefud with a young Sharari, named Masud, to protect us from his co-tribesmen.

In one dale huge isolated bowlders, insufficiently supported because of erosion, leaned drunkenly to one side or balanced precariously on their edges, or lay completely toppled over. It was a curious sight.

Later we were joined by another Sharari and two Rwala on one camel who were glad of our support while we rejoiced in the addition of their two rifles.

It was laborious going in the sand and we stopped to survey the scene. First we saw the irregular cones of Kur Mleh; then to the east the tabular hills of Hawja like a fortress; farther east a straight crest of hill; while to the south protruded the two horns of Hdajan. Beyond, the rocky heights lifted themselves like a gigantic Gothic castle. Below, the Nefud, a sea of sand, spread at the base of the looming mountains of Tawil (Fig. 19).

We cleaned our carbines and loaded them with sharp

cartridges. In the pitch darkness we found ourselves on the fringe of a deep funnel-like hollow which frightened our camels. For a while we could move neither forward nor backward. But we had to enter the drift and get through it somehow. It was a hard and hazardous undertaking. I led my camel but it failed to gain solid footing upon the sandy slope and kept slipping and dragging me along, and when finally with great effort I brought it up to the sharp crest of the drift the edge gave way and slid down, burying me under a mass of sand. Freyh and Mhammad rushed to my aid and were likewise engulfed. Once free of the sandy avalanche we dug steps in the crest by which the camels could cross to the other side and when at last they were safe we lay down upon the sand too tired to bother with beds. In the sand I had lost my watch, the money I carried, and a camel stick.

We had only a little water left and the nearest well was still a long way off. We noticed in the sand the fresh tracks of six ostriches, and upon a near-by sand hill we saw eighteen eagles, while some distance away, hiding behind a bush of *ghaza,* were two ravens.

"Look, Sheikh Musa, there, upon that sand hill!" exclaimed our guide Masud. "Those are Rwala and the two ravens hiding beyond, those are we, the Shararat."

Since we had learned of robber bands at the wells of Mleh we turned toward Mowt. More hills of fantastic shape and huge funnel-like pits in the dunes greeted our eyes. We followed a gloomy plain with apparently not a plant in it and were suddenly confronted by a deep basin, difficult of descent. The Shararat warned us against the water of Mowt which is said to be so bitter and unfit to drink that in either man or animal it causes violent dysentery. Finally, on Wednesday, January 27, we reached the

wells of Hdajan, late at night. Even in these wells there was so little water that we were three hours filling our bags and with the remainder could water but two of our camels. Freyh and Masud took the others to the northern wells.

In the territory of the Shararat a burial ground is adjacent to almost every watering place. At the wells of Hdajan there was a burial ground too. Upon one of the graves we saw lying a common dog. These dogs are only allowed to sleep by the side wall of the women's compartment. They must not enter the men's compartment because the Bedouins maintain that they are unclean, nor must they eat from any vessel intended for food or cooking. The household dogs are strong, thick-set animals with short, shaggy hair and broad heads. They guard the camels and the tent against beasts of prey and against thieves who creep in at night. Woe to the guest who is compelled to leave the tent several times during the night! They would rend him to pieces were he to go out unaccompanied by someone they knew.

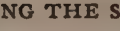
The dogs become attached to the mistress of the tent and often show their fidelity in an incredible way. Mhammad thought that probably this dog was guarding the grave of a woman tentkeeper from prowling hyenas.

"Do not wonder, Musa. It is bare truth. I myself experienced it. We had a very good watchdog who followed his mistress wherever she went. Then, in the depression of Sirhan, Allah recalled the mistress of my tent from this world to the other. She obeyed. We buried her not far from the camp and went elsewhere. Our dog disappeared. We sought him, waited for him, but he did not come. Three months later I was joined by my son who wept bitterly when he heard that his mother was dead. He

asked me to show him her grave. I took him there and do you know, Musa, whom we found there? Our household dog. The sand round about was much trampled, and scattered over it were the hairs of hyenas which the dog had driven away from the grave. The dog had quenched his thirst at a spring near by and had sustained himself on locusts and human and animal excrement at a deserted camp. For three months he had stayed upon the grave, in the new tent, of his mistress."

"Did he return with you?"

"No, he did not. He kept on guarding his mistress."



AMONG THE SHARARAT

To the south we sighted smoke, indication of a camp, which some Rwala at the wells informed us belonged to the chief, Eben Kreytan, a personal friend of Nuri. We came upon delightful springtime plants upon which we should have liked to let our camels graze, but we dared not pause until we had established friendly relations with the camp.

Alarm cries and shots rang out. Camel riders rounded up their herds and escaped. They had taken us for scouts of a raiding party! We rode on, our two Shararat calling out repeatedly: "O Shararat, we are also Shararat!"

Finally we were approached by an armed rider who, recognizing our fellow Mhammad Rai-s-Sabbara, cried out laughingly:

"Since you are accompanied by Mhammad Rai-s-Sabbara, you are not enemies."

We were soon surrounded by some twenty fighters

armed with good rifles, who inquired about camps and accompanied us part of the way.

The Shararat belong among the despised tribes of Arabia. They are pitifully poor. The territory of the Shararat is bare, infertile, without sufficient pasturage and water. They have, therefore, to seek hospitality in the adjacent lands of their neighbors, to whom they make various payments. If an abundant rain irrigates their own land their neighbors occupy it and their herds eat everything that has sprouted. The Shararat find it impossible to defend themselves because they depend on the good will of their neighbors in the years when their own territory is dead. This dependence is the real cause of the contempt with which the neighboring tribes look upon the Shararat.

After brief greetings with the chief we moved on. I could not tear my eyes from the scenes that presented themselves. What looked like a modern oblong fort met my gaze: circular pavilions projected from the ends; at the corners and in the center were tall round towers with flat roofs; above the southern wall stood a blunt tower like that of a church. All were equipped with rows of loopholes for guns, and the whole enormous fort was surrounded by high, light-yellow earthworks. But no! this was but nature's carving on soft and solid sandstone strata, and the earthworks—sandy drifts.

I looked farther. To the eastern horizon stretched the mysterious, reddish-yellow desert, the Nefud; in the southeast appeared the Moving Families, isolated hillocks, so-called because from a distance they resemble migrating Arabs with their riders, men on foot, camels with loads, herds of large and small camels.

"O Musa, what will not vanish in this world?" said

the negro Freyh, when I explained the genesis of the Moving Families. "Everything will disappear, but the Creator will be forever the same."

As we stood looking at these strange shapes I heard a shot and a bullet whizzed over my head. Just in time I turned to see at our right behind a bowlder several camel riders and the foremost one in the act of reloading his smoking rifle. He raised it to his cheek and took aim at me. I saw the flash, the smoke. Would it hit me? Involuntarily I ducked. *Al-hamdu lillah!* It whistled several inches above my head, but the aim had been well taken. Instantly I seized my carbine but at that moment the guide Masud rode between us, stretched out his mantle, and called:

"O Shararat, do not kill Shararat!" Whereupon the assailants fell upon him and pulled him off his camel; but recognizing in him a Sharari they apologized, declaring that Allah had not willed that their bullets hit us. Not until the danger was past did a shiver run over me. It is a strange sensation to see a loaded weapon aimed at you and fired.

Later, five Shararat joined us, which made twelve of us in all, enough to repulse any band of robbers. I sketched a map of the vicinity and we all had supper.

When, on Friday, we reached the wells of Assafiyye, which are about forty yards deep, we found a cemetery with many graves surrounded by low round walls through which are narrow apertures. Before each grave stands a stone tablet about twenty inches high. My companions maintained that these graves are very old, dating from the time of the primeval inhabitants of Arabia; that they themselves do not erect such walls.

Our camels had had so little water at Hdajan that they

were very thirsty. Straightway, therefore, a young Sharari undressed and descended into the well and we lowered the canvas bucket to him on a rope. As fast as he filled it with water we raised it and poured the contents into a deep vessel from which our thirsty camels could drink. We pulled him out by the rope and then he went down another well and the process was repeated.

When we departed from the wells the Rwala and the Shararat left us and went to the southwest, while we, accompanied by Masud, proceeded through the desolate plain to the south.

TOWARDS THE OASIS OF TEYMA

That night and early the next morning I talked with my companions about our trip. I should have liked to go to Teyma and explore the ancient burying ground of Mejenne. The Rwala and Shararat told of castles built in the rocks there and of tombs hewn in the sandstone hills; so I hoped there might also be Nabatæan inscriptions. But Prince Nuri as well as all the Rwala and Shararat migrating from the north had spoken of serious dissension prevailing in and near the oasis of Teyma. For five months it had been in the grip of civil war. Abdarrahman eben Rashid was afraid that Nuri meant to attack not merely Jowf but Teyma as well; hence should I, a friend of the Prince, go to Teyma, he would consider me an emissary sent to embroil the inhabitants in the strife against him. How would he receive me? Would he banish me or would he detain me as a hostage? As long as the Rwala were camping in the vicinity of Teyma and watering there at the wells of Haddaj, I could have depended on them and this I had intended to do. The Rwala,

however, were migrating and only some families were left. If they too should leave, the vicinity of the oasis would be occupied by the enemies of the Rwala.

Because all the roads leading to Teyma were infested with robbers who did not hesitate to kill, they were called the Roads of Death. Trustworthy men assured me that not a single week passed in which a traveler was not killed near the oasis. Nevertheless I had numerous references to the settlers and to several members of Eben Rashid's family, and I felt that these references to the settlers in Teyma had not lost their value, inasmuch as the settlers are dependent in many ways upon the citizens of Damascus who gave me the references. With the help of the settlers, therefore, and with the assistance of the Rwala camping near Teyma I intended to carry out my work. But it was very desirable that the last of the Rwala should not leave before I arrived.

Tuman sighted some Arabs coming from the south. Immediately Masud and I joined him and lying on our stomachs raised our heads above the sharp crest of the sand drift to look. Southwest of the hill we perceived camel riders, camels with tents and miscellaneous implements, herds of camels, and several horseback riders—apparently migrating Rwala.

We were so near Teyma that to the southwest the somber hill of Ghneym already showed itself; in front of it is the burial ground of Mejenne where I intended to work. North of this hill, in a deep lowland filled with tiers of quivering air, lay the oasis of Teyma. Should we reach it?

After a while we encountered two of the camel riders who informed us that within the whole of Teyma there was not one Rweyli left. The chief of the Nseyr clan,

who came to me soon afterwards, advised me to leave all my baggage with him and proceed to Teyma on light camels with only the negro Freyh and the guide Masud. He considered it possible that we might reach the burial ground of Mejenne alive under the protection of Allah and our weapons, and by the speed of our camels.

"Like hyenas and wolves," he warned me, "the enemies of the Rwala are prowling around and you belong to the Rwala."

Without my baggage and scientific instruments, however, I could not work effectively either in the burial ground or in Teyma; and besides, where was I afterwards to look for Mhammad and Tuman with the baggage? For the Rwala were migrating, and whether northward or northeastward or eastward who could tell? Yet I could not willingly decide to abandon my goal and so I plodded silently on in the course we had planned. After the last of the migrating Rwala had disappeared from our view, Freyh sighed and said to me:

"O Sheikh Musa, we will follow you wherever you go. If you must go to Teyma, so must we, even though it cost us our throats. Allah will take care of our children."

Hearing that, I turned my camel to the northeast. I had not originally intended to examine either Teyma or Mejenne anyway.

We filled our water bags at the wells of Ubeyt and from there on Saturday, January 30, we went due north. The camels walked very slowly because of the irritating sandstone ribs in the ground, like plates standing on edge.

At noon we noted the fresh tracks of camels here and there in the fine sand that covered the plain in places. On examining them closely my companions Freyh and Masud concluded that they were imprinted by animals

whose home was the Nefud, for the hoofs of the camels of the Nefud are cut by the sharp sand as if filed with a rasp; consequently their footprints are smooth or show a large number of minute corrugations. We judged that there were more than a hundred of them heading from the southeast to the northwest: hence the throng could be no other than the Bedouins of the chief Eben Rakhis of the Shammar, who had been camping in the western part of the Nefud and watering his camels at the wells situated at the border between the stony and the sandy regions. Because the Shammar were engaged in warfare with the Rwala we surmised that Eben Rakhis had undertaken a raid upon one of the Rwala clans north of Assafiyye. Should we not encounter these raiders?

The sun set in a pageant of color. The western sky seemed to be covered with rough lava bathed in fresh blood. Out of the lava protruded a solitary volcano—a dark cloud—and into the blood-red volcanic region penetrated two light blue inlets of the heavenly ocean. The volcano appeared to grow, its shadow lengthened, the blood settled and darkened. The negro Freyh turned his face away from the western sky and implored Allah to prevent the bloodshed that the sunset seemed to foretell. We passed the night behind a sandstone ridge.

THE NEFUD

We proceeded through a boundless plain toward the rosy Areyzh an-Nefud, a sandy projection which the Nefud thrusts out against the wind toward the west, seeking, as the Shararat declare, to destroy all their wells. The sand hills seemed to be close to us, yet we could not reach

them. I kept closing my eyes to convince myself after a few minutes that we really had made progress; but the plain was endless. Masud, beside me, had been singing the same short ditty, off the key, for over an hour:

"May your omen, O *ghazw*,[1] be good!
May it signify herds spending the night far from tents.
May your omen, O *ghazw*, be good!
May it signify herds close by."

In the fine sand we found many tracks of lizards, showing the sharp outlines of their feet on both sides of grooves made by their tails, and near many of the bushes we saw deep spirals made by snakes, which lean upon their own bodies, especially when crawling upward. Several times we crossed the fresh tracks of antelopes, ostriches, hyenas, and wolves. Once we came upon the new grave of a Sharari into which hyenas had penetrated; from within protruded the two shins of the dead, both gnawed off.

At last a dark solitary hill, a landmark in the district of Khunfa, appeared on our right (Fig. 9). It is a sign to travelers from the north that they will soon enter the stony desert, whereas to travelers from the south it heralds the proximity of the sandy waste.

We reached the edge of the sandy desert. Whoever views it from the south notices innumerable sand dunes, sharply pointed, ranging from west to east; all are of the same height and all are separated by hollows sixty to a hundred feet deep.

In the afternoon we entered the projection of the Nefud which rises gradually from the level plain. On its southern slope *ghaza*, which is one of the most beautiful plants in the desert, grows abundantly (Fig. 10).

[1] Raid.

Frequently it develops into trees twenty-five feet high with trunks eight inches in diameter, but more often it grows in bushes. The branches are long and elastic, the bark clear white, the needles a fresh green. Camels eat the needles and young twigs with gusto. The wood is tough, and when dry it is an ideal fuel, producing almost no smoke, burning with a white flame for a long time and leaving only smoldering red coals and fine white ashes. No other fuel furnishes so much heat as the *ghaza* and its coals will smolder for over ten hours. What joy they give to a traveler shivering with cold, who dares not have a flame in the night although he yearns for warmth! Wherever the *ghaza* grows in bushes it holds the sand by its roots, thus making a nucleus for the formation of small mounds of sand.

A very sad spectacle is presented by bushes that have been uprooted by the wind. Their glistening, dry, white branches and trunks protrude from the sand so bent and broken that they seem like the bleached bones of men or camels covering a former battleground. Indeed, the uprooted *ghaza* does in reality lie scattered over a battleground, but the battle has been fought not between men, but between frail plants and the indomitable, pitiless wind and its ally, the treacherous sand. At the wind's bidding the sand forms a mound among and around the stems of the *ghaza* into which it permits the plant's roots to sink; hardly has the plant come to feel secure than the sand obeys the wind again and the piteous *ghaza* must perish.

As we found some of the sand dunes too steep to climb we went around them to the west. On this detour we crossed fresh tracks of eight large and three small antelopes. We made camp for the night in a secluded pit.

Now, February 2, we began to traverse the Nefud proper. The Nefud is one of the most interesting and beautiful natural features of northern Arabia. The low, rosy dunes, their steep sides overgrown by *ghaza* and other plants, give it the appearance of a huge garden or a terrace-like cemetery planted with weeping willows and birches. The sharp bare peaks and crests of the dunes remind one of glaciers in high mountains, and the hollows among the dunes resemble green mountain valleys. But there is no water and the soil of this beautiful region is treacherous sand. Even the sea is not so dangerous as the shimmering, rose-colored sand which forms these splendid, sleek plains. The eye lets itself be deceived; the rider takes it for granted that he may hasten ahead and urges his mount to a swifter pace. At places the sand is so solid that it does not even take footprints, when suddenly the animal sinks up to the knees and the rider must quickly swerve his frightened mount if he is to avoid disaster. Often the camel has been going in long strides over the sandy level when, on entering what looks like nothing but a small swell, he finds himself on the brink of a precipitous wall of sand: one more step and both animal and rider would lie, with shattered bones, in the deep pit (Fig. 11).

"In the Nefud there are roads everywhere," mused our guide, "and yet in the Nefud there are no roads. Whosoever does not know the Nefud must not venture thither, and who loses his way in the Nefud loses his life."

Every migrating tribe and every raiding party provides itself with a guide who knows the Nefud well, usually an ostrich or antelope hunter. Only he who is thoroughly acquainted with the passes among the various sand dunes

can travel through the Nefud freely. These passes are usually near the funnel-shaped pits.

Besides numerous tracks of antelopes and ostriches, we noted in the sand the footprints of the rapacious *zarbul.* It is said to be an animal smaller than a dog with a grayish-yellow back, a black belly, and a dog's head. Its skin has a characteristic smell. It attacks lone camels and even sleeping travelers.

From under an *arta*[1] bush I scared out a yellow bird about as large as a domestic fowl and known as *tandara.* Its meat is reputed to be excellent. Flapping its wings heavily, it flew several hundred yards off and hid again in a thicket. I shot two dozing hares. The color of their fur was a blend of yellows and reds completely harmonizing with the sand, whereas the fur of the hares I had shot in the volcanic region was dark brown or black. Even the smaller birds I saw in the Nefud were the color of the sand. The *umm salem,* about the size of our sparrow, has a pleasant song, brief and quiet.

Before noon our camels grazed. Later on we crossed several perilous slopes so steep that we had to dig a succession of slanting steps in the sand down which we cautiously led our animals. A false step, a slip, and the animal would roll down the steep incline. The camels trembled, spread their legs, leaned upon their forefeet, testing the ground before venturing ahead. The Nefud fairly bristles with such hollows.

Often it seemed to me as if we were proceeding through vineyards; this was especially so where *arta* grew abundantly, often developing into huge stalks with heads as large as four yards across. Its bare branches resemble the

[1] *Calligonum comosum,* L.; nearly leafless shrub with scaly branches, clusters of small flowers, and hairy nut-shaped fruit.

branches of vines and cover the mounds of sand just as the vine branches rest upon heaps of stone in many parts of northern Syria. The thin roots look like ropes and are sometimes as much as twenty yards long. The foliage of the *arta*, long and narrow like needles, is utilized by women in place of tanbark in the tanning of hides.

We encamped on the eastern side of a pit. The camels were tired and the terrain was arduous, and since we were well concealed there, I did not intend to proceed at night. We made a map of the environs, ascertained the latitude, and spent some time in changing photographic plates.

Feeling safe in the pit, we built a cheery fire in the morning, heated our coffee, and rode merrily on. The dunes of this part of the Nefud run from northwest to southeast. Several days before, this district had been traversed by a large migrating throng of the Rwala: evidently hundreds, nay, thousands of camels had trodden the sand. We could see their tracks, however, only in the hollows; upon the upper flat areas all the prints had been leveled even with the surface, which was again seamed by ripples shaped like ellipses with transverse axes running at right angles to the direction of the last wind. Only camel dung indicated the direction that the migrating throng had followed.

IN A SAND STORM TO JOWF

FAR ahead of us and, as it seemed, below us we saw the Tawil range, which appeared to be lower than the Nefud. Rwala herdsmen told us that Feysal eben Rashid had ordered the wells of Sfan to be filled up in order to prevent an attack on his people. This news was disappointing for, as Sfan had always contained water even when

all the other wells went dry, we had intended to water our camels there and to fill our bags. The only thing left for us to do, therefore, was to hasten on to Jowf. We left the Nefud behind us.

A little later we heard a singular rumbling as if thousands of riders were galloping behind us, and immediately we felt a violent blast of wind and were enveloped in a cloud of sand. It was the beginning of a sandstorm such as I had seldom experienced in the desert. The wind moaned and roared, driving great drifts of sand past us. Over the level we had been crossing surged waves of sand two to five yards high, rising and falling with the wind. Wherever the sand encountered an obstacle or a depression it swept away the obstacle or filled up the hole and rushed on over the leveled plain. What luck that the storm had not caught us within the Nefud! We should certainly have perished. And what luck that the storm was blowing from the southwest to the northeast, thus pushing us ahead!

At noon we met herds of the Rwala returning from the watering places at Jowf. At moments when the wind subsided somewhat we learned from the yelling herdsmen that Nawwaf had entered Jowf two days before and proclaimed himself, in the name of his father, master of the oasis and its vicinity—news very pleasant to me, for I was certain of finding hospitality and protection with him. The poor herdsmen and their camels, bound toward the south, could hardly push a step ahead, and the animals growled and wailed at every particularly strong blast. While we were talking with the herdsmen the camels spread their hind legs and thrust their forelegs forward to gain support against the wind.

With the wind at our backs, we hastened to the north-

FIG. 12
A draw well in Jowf

FIG. 13
In a garden of Jowf

east at a swift pace. The sand caused us acute pain, physical as well as mental. Our ears, mouths, nostrils, and especially our eyes were full of fine grains which irritated the sensitive membranes and caused great suffering. Moreover, the fine sand penetrated our garments and rubbed against the skin, exciting our nerves. And Jowf was still so far away!

But at last, toward evening on February 4, we sighted ahead of us a deep basin in the stony plain and within the basin the dark green heads of palm trees. It was the settlement of Dumat al-Jandaliyye (Jowf) lying far below us. We made the descent and proceeded toward the settlement. A sentry challenged us and then escorted us to a gate. Compelling our camels to kneel we found ourselves immediately surrounded by the familiar negroes and warriors of the Rwala. They greeted me cordially.

WITH NAWWAF THE CONQUEROR

The substantial building in which Nawwaf resided was in the form of a square and was enclosed by a high wall reënforced at the southeastern corner by a low rectangular tower, and with another but much higher tower at the northwestern corner. East of the higher tower was a gate, the only entrance into a large court. On the eastern and western side of the court near the fortification walls were smaller rooms. It was possible to climb to the flat roof of the western rooms by means of steps at the southwest corner; the eastern roof, however, one could reach only by scaling the trunk of a palm tree. Both roofs were overtopped by the fortification wall, the upper part of which was built of adobe. At the northwest corner of the court

a wide door opened into the large rectangular tower, two stories high and reënforced in the center by a huge pillar. On the ground floor of this tower was a single dark room; against the southwestern corner of the room leaned the trunk of a palm tree up which one climbed into the first story, and a similar trunk connected this story with the second one. From the only room of the first story a narrow wicket opened upon the western roof. Both towers, like the ground-floor room, had loopholes but no windows.

Nawwaf came to meet me and led me into the ground-floor room, where, behind the pillar, flamed a great fire. We seated ourselves by it out of sight of the door. Nawwaf said he had come to Jowf with thirty-five soldiers, most of them young negroes, who never laid aside their loaded rifles.

In the evening there came to Nawwaf about fifty armed men from Jowf, with their chiefs. The chiefs took seats at the fire opposite us, their escorts remaining in the yard. At the left, between us and the entrance, were stationed fifteen negroes with loaded rifles. Nawwaf did not trust the chiefs and, not meaning to be taken by surprise, he sat down with me so that the pillar intervened between us and the door, thus protecting us from any shots that might be fired at us from the yard or from the small southwest tower. The chiefs were headed by Zeben eben Kaayyed, a man about forty years old, with features that reminded me strongly of the physiognomy of the ancient Babylonians. He was now the head chief in Jowf and as such came to invite Prince Nuri to take the reins of government within the oasis and its vicinity.

The oasis of Jowf, being situated on the southern border of northern Arabia, must of necessity maintain good relations with the tribe holding sway in that region, if

its inhabitants are not to be at the mercy of every party of raiders and band of robbers. So long as the dominion of Eben Rashid was strong and the Rwala friendly to it, Eben Rashid's garrison was able to hold Jowf. But when they lost their master the inhabitants of Jowf began to wage war among themselves. Eben Kaayyed united with Nawwaf and attacked Eben Naame and his followers who had taken refuge in Mared and Khadhne.

Eben Kaayyed, well knowing the impregnability of the two districts occupied by the enemy, advised Nawwaf to destroy the property of his opponents and starve them into capitulation.

I pleaded with Nawwaf to ignore the advice of Eben Kaayyed, because by obeying he would sacrifice the welfare of Jowf for a score of years, and I advised him not to negotiate with Eben Naame but with the chiefs of Mared and Khadhne, as eventually these would have to concede that they could not count upon the aid of Eben Rashid and hence would be unable to resist the Rwala. Nawwaf promised that he would follow my advice.

Before midnight I retired into one of the chambers at the western side of the court where I was to sleep, but the room was so full of people and all kinds of small insects that rest was impossible. I was glad when the morning star rose above the eastern wall.

After sunrise I surveyed the vicinity from a heap of ruins. The settlements of Jowf (the basin, the cavity) are situated, as the name implies, in a basin extending from west eastward. This basin is about sixty miles long, about six miles wide, and forty to fifty yards deep. The run-off flows down the surrounding heights into it and remains throughout the year on the underlying rocks under a layer of coarse sand and gravel, emerging at

many places in the form of springs and elsewhere filling wells from fifteen to seventy-five feet deep. In the deepest wells the water is quite tepid and somewhat salty (Fig. 12). It is, of course, the abundance of water that accounts for the presence of men and settlements at Jowf. The largest settlement is called by the inhabitants Dumat al-Jandaliyye, while the appellations Jowf and Juba refer to the entire basin with the remainder of the settlements.

Dumat al-Jandaliyye comprises about four hundred dwellings and is subdivided into ten precincts. Except in the case of Mared, every precinct has palm gardens, in the midst of which are the houses. The gardens are surrounded by high walls (Fig. 13). Through a substantial gate one enters a narrow street between two inner garden walls and, following it, comes to a small yard shaped like a cross from which four solid gates open into four houses. At the place where the four gardens meet there usually is a well from which camels and cows draw water for the irrigation of the gardens.

Of the dates grown at Jowf those smaller than a walnut, yellow, and somewhat sour, ripen earliest. The most palatable variety consists of dates that are black and almost as long as a finger, but thicker. Dates are not weighed but measured and are prepared in various ways. When they are good but unripe they are mixed with cut *adher*[1] and cooked over a moderate fire until all the juice evaporates; then they are divided in the middle to dry, strung on twine, and preserved as food for travelers. Another method is to roast *semh*, grind it, and mix it with ripe black dates. The *semh* will absorb all the juice and the mixture will last over a year without spoiling.

In the gardens figs, oranges, lemons, apricots, grapes,

[1] A scented subshrub with pinnate leaves and small flowers.

and various vegetables also grow luxuriantly. Beside many of the walls are planted slender *ethel* trees. The wood of these trees is used in the making of flat roofs. Immediately outside the gardens and sometimes inside them are small fields planted with wheat or barley.

Soon Nawwaf was beset by many of the inhabitants who implored that I come to visit their sick and wounded. I was taken through several districts occupied by friends and subjects of Nawwaf. Two of these sections were almost completely demolished, the houses deserted, the palms scorched, the garden walls undermined. I met men rolling before them young palms which they had dug up in the gardens of their defeated fellow citizens and proposed to plant in their own.

The wounded were in a miserable plight, with their wounds full of filth and pus, their limbs swollen, and all suffering from fever. I learned that already over three hundred fighters had been killed and that shooting was still in progress. Some of the settlers informed me that in the district of Mared there was a stone with strange writing on it embedded in a wall, and of course I was eager to see it. No sooner, however, had I come out of the gardens into the free space between Mared and the cliff that hedges in the basin on the west than I was greeted by two shots.

After ascertaining the latitude that evening, I ordered Mhammad to carry my blanket up to the western roof, but Nawwaf objected, warning me that I could easily be struck by a bullet. I was so exhausted, however, that I craved rest regardless of the danger. Barely had I lain down when the sentries began to shout an alarm and Nawwaf's warriors immediately occupied both the towers and the roofs, for Eben Naame had undertaken an as-

sault in the direction of our house. Being repulsed, he repeated the attempt twice more during the night. The shots rang in my ears incessantly and fighters were running all about me; several bullets even clicked upon the stone wall of the large tower. I could not sleep, and of course there could be no thought of attempting any quiet work. Since, furthermore, there was no pasture for my camels near Jowf I decided to return the following day to Prince Nuri. Leaving the proper medicines and bandages with Nawwaf I set out to Prince Nuri's camp, some two days' march away.

BACK TO NURI

The negro Freyh remained at Jowf, and we were escorted by a daring robber of the name of Mindil al-Kati. There was no perilous expedition in which he would not participate. He undertook raids into foreign territories on his own responsibility and frequently was absent for months with two or three comrades, robbing travelers and cashing the booty. He had not saved anything, however, for he was as liberal as he was courageous. Nawwaf was sending him to his father, Nuri, to report on the eastern territories in which the man had been roaming for almost five weeks and from which he had returned but two days before. Besides other booty, he had brought three camels seized from the Kmusa group of the Sbaa tribe. He had attacked three robbers who were members of that tribe, had taken their camels from them, and had brought them upon their own mounts all the way to Jowf. The robbers complained to Nawwaf that the assault was unjustifiable because they were friends of the Rwala, but Nawwaf asserted that he would keep their camels until their co-

tribesman, Bleyhan, returned to me the camel he stole when he left.

That afternoon we approached the wells of Mayku.

"Near Mayku we shall surely find Nuri," said Mindil. "It is the last large watering place with permanent water at the south end of the depression of Sirhan. These deep wells, sometimes a hundred feet deep, have hoists set up near them. A hoist consists of two stout poles about five yards long, made fast in the same pit and bent over the well. These two poles are held apart. In holes bored through them an iron axis is then fitted with a wooden roller from which hangs the rope holding the bucket. The free end of the rope is held by one or two persons who draw the water. A third person stationed close by the hoist takes care that the rope does not slide off the roller and shakes it occasionally to submerge and fill the bucket. He tells the drawers to walk till the bucket comes in sight. At that moment he shouts to them to stop, catches hold of the bucket, empties it into the leather trough, and then bids them return, thus letting the bucket down again.

"When a woman has to pull the rope she tucks her gown up to her knees and throws the long open sleeves over her shoulders, tying them behind lest they hinder her. If the rope is worked by two persons, they hold a short stick tied to the rope's end. The youths like to help draw water and pull the rope to their sweethearts because they have an opportunity to speak with them, observe them closely, and perhaps even to touch them. One of my comrades expressed it nicely:

"May rain fill the watering places at Mayku—
Brimful, the first well, whence the rope returns with the pail.
There cluster the camps, the large and the little:

There they prepare the water-hoists and the gear.
I saw a conquering maiden, her dress tucked close
To her calves, her sleeves neck-bound, drawing taut the rope's slack.
By Allah! Were the rope four times its length, what avail?
Unheeded the pourer would be, though he shouted: 'Come back!'
With my hand I felt her arm even down to the elbow,
Drawing back my hand ninety times, no less, that day.
Keep the secret like the noble Jedu,
Who never gave a game of love away.
Scamps he shelters when every idler is fearful;
A saber he has, the edge of which splits heads.
Fared I yesterday as to-day, no hunger had pained me,
For behold, I see my fat has been restored
By you, my thirst allayed when your teeth I kissed.
O love, how sweet permitted kisses taste!
By Allah! Violated, violator, beware this camp!
By Allah! One tribe shall not another lay waste."

Sighting a large camp near the wells, we rejoiced in the assumption that it was the camp of Prince Nuri. Our camels strode toward the camp but the first herdsman we met disappointed us by saying:

"Nuri went to-day toward the wells of Mleh."

He had, then, left in the direction whence we had just come! We longed to stop, but nowhere was there a bush to be seen, no pasture for the camels, no fuel for ourselves. Only by midnight had we discovered a few dry bushes of *rimth* which could be used as fuel; so we encamped by them.

During the night we heard the barking of dogs and growling of camels: evidently the Prince's camp was close by. Early in the morning of Tuesday, February 9, we

were at the Prince's tent. I was greeted on all sides and Nuri said:

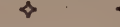
"*Al-hamdu lillah,* Allah be praised, brother! You undertake raids the like of which even your present companion Mindil has not ventured upon."

It seems the Prince was seeking pasture on the assurance of the Shararat, north of the wells of Mleh. When I informed him that I had found none there, he replied:

"In that case we shall encamp at Hawja, sending our herds thence to pasture with those of the chief Eben Kreytan, whose brother is accompanying me."

Naser told me that our herdsman Mufazzi had been shot by a Rweyli, but that the bullet had hit merely the fleshy part of the calf of his leg.

VI. ON THE FRINGES OF THE NEFUD



PREPARATIONS FOR A RAID

After all the tents had been loaded, I remounted my camel and rode with the Prince at the head of the migrating tribe. I wondered at his youthful appearance: his eyelashes, beard, and hair were dyed black and he was dressed in a new garment. Later I learned that two days previously he had divorced his wife, the mother of Saud and Khafaji, and immediately afterward had married her sister who was sixteen years younger. Nobody but his nearest relatives and slaves knew of the marriage; he had not celebrated the event and there had been no feast. To the divorced wife and her son Saud he gave a tent—before that the abode of Hmar and his family—, ordered it to be pitched close to his, and visited the woman and his son just as he did his other wives.

Nuri told me that a courier had come with letters from Eben Saud urging him to occupy Jowf and advising him that all the chiefs of the Shammar, except two, were asking for peace and promising to pay him tribute. We encamped in the dell of Jemal on February 8.

The brother of the chief Eben Kreytan always rode behind the Prince and did not dare to sit near a fire by which he was sitting or to speak in his presence; yet Soleyman eben Kreytan was the richest and proudest warrior of his tribe . . . He was only a raven, while Nuri was an eagle.

By February 11 we had reached the wells of Hawja,

where we pitched our tents. The next three days I barely left my round tent, for I was busy rewriting the account of my last expedition. The Prince came every day to see how I fared and invited me to accompany him upon a contemplated raid to the south. I was glad of this as I supposed that thus I could reach the burial ground of Mejenne.

Our camels went to a distant pasture. About thirty fighters came to ask the Prince to start on the contemplated raid. Nuri, however, sent them back, postponing the day of the raid; whereat one of them exclaimed indignantly:

"Well, he cannot part from his young wife!" Nuri, however, told me that his summons had not yet reached all the clans.

On Saturday and Sunday morning the chiefs of the various Shararat clans arrived to greet the Prince and offer their services. He dealt with them haughtily, hardly noticing them the entire afternoon but letting them sit alone in his tent while he entertained himself in my large tent with his head slave Hmar and the scribe Jwad. He would not enter my small tent for fear of its "evil smell," which had been caused by the overturn of a bottle of iodine while I was bandaging my herdsman's wound. Indeed, Nuri was so afraid of it that he even asked me quite seriously if the smell would not cause the wounds of his older fighters to reopen.

Wounded and sick Bedouins fear nothing so much as an evil smell. I had taken with me into the desert several boxes of perfumed soap as gifts to women. These were contained in a large sack which emitted an odor so fragrant as we marched along that in order to escape harm the Bedouins used to dodge the camel that carried the bag.

Still, everybody wanted a piece of that soap, and Nawwaf begged me to send several boxes of it to Jowf that he might distribute it among the wives and daughters of the settlers.

Nuri announced to me that on Thursday, February 18, he was going to undertake the raid, but he failed to tell me against what tribe. It was rumored that he was likely to attack the Hteym, but nobody knew anything for certain.

"You have undertaken a raid against us with Âl Fayez of the tribe Beni Sakhr," he laughed, "and hence I think you should now accompany me against my enemies."

Thinking that I might be able to work at Teyma and explore the territory south of it, I readily promised to go along. The rumors of the events in Teyma were contradictory, some reporting a civil war, others denying it.

Twelve fighters of the Weld Sleyman came to the Prince to settle various controversies that had arisen between their tribe and the Rwala. That evening Jwad, the Prince's scribe, came to request me, in the Prince's name, to deposit in his tent all the rifles and revolvers that I did not intend to take along on the raid, because after the departure of the Prince upon the warlike expedition there would be only two rifles in the camp. I informed the scribe that I should have only one rifle and one revolver to leave and that I should claim those whenever I needed them. When the Prince had agreed to this condition, I handed the pieces over to him. Nuri desired to have my weapons and was always scheming to secure them under some pretense.

On the following morning we were all in readiness to depart and were merely awaiting the Prince's command to mount the camels. Nuri, however, was in close negotiations with the Weld Sleyman and did not come out of his

tent until after ten o'clock, when he curtly commanded: "The mount camels to pasture." The raid was off. When asked why, he answered:

"I intended to attack the Hteym and upon my return the Weld Sleyman also, but I have become reconciled with the latter and therefore have no reason for preying upon their herds. I am unable to learn anything reliable about the whereabouts of the Hteym and the Arabs of Sirhan abu Shama. Some claim that both are encamped south of Ela, others look for them in the vicinity of Khaybar, and still others maintain that they are located in the upper portion of the valley of Rma; in view of all this, I have requested the Weld Sleyman to make inquiries as to their precise location and to advise me within eight days, at which time I shall decide whether to march upon them or not."

I was very anxious to leave immediately for the east in order to explore that part of the desert and to finish my map of the country, but of course under the present warlike conditions it was advisable to wait until I could go accompanied by the raiding party.

The following two days I spent collecting information about the regions east and northeast of Jowf, working on the geographical sketch map, making corrections according to the accounts of various informants, and supplementing them whenever possible.

On Saturday six fighters brought home all the riding camels of Nawwaf's band and said that Nawwaf begged his father to encamp either in or near the oasis of Jowf and thus to augment Nawwaf's prestige by his presence. It seemed to me as if Nuri mistrusted his son and was jealous of him. Nawwaf's difficulties in Jowf seemed to increase daily. Awde al-Kwechbi, my old acquaintance and

informant, who had just arrived from Jowf, told me that many of Nawwaf's adherents had gone over to his opponents, unable to withstand the arrogance and penuriousness of Eben Kaayyed any longer; that the enemy was making attacks on Nawwaf nightly, so that he could not leave his house and was suffering from lack of food; and finally that Nawwaf begged me to describe his misery to his father and urge him to march to Jowf. But Nuri procrastinated. He pretended to be awaiting an answer from the Weld Sleyman and also the return of his messenger from Eben Saud; but the negro preparing his coffee said:

"He does not attend to anything but his young wife and his wool coat that he likes to lie on."

Mindil al-Kati arrived from Jowf with a written as well as verbal plea from Nawwaf to send him food and money. Nuri had the written message read to him in my tent and he listened to the verbal account there; still he did nothing.

Trad eben Sattam came to me with a complaint about Abdallah eben Talal. The latter, he said, had taken unto himself as wife a daughter of Nuri, who had complained of bad treatment at his hands and deserted him, and now dwelt in the tent of her father, refusing to return to her husband. Abdallah was, therefore, seeking another wife. He had fallen in love with the sister of Trad and on Sunday came to him to ask for her hand, since Trad now stood to her in the place of her dead father. As the girl did not care for Abdallah, however, Trad refused to give his consent; whereupon Abdallah declared that he had reserved the girl for himself and would not permit her to marry anyone else, asserting that as her nearest relative he had the first right to her.

For several days Nuri's tent had also been occupied by another of his daughters, a slender girl of about seventeen years of age, with diseased eyes. She had married Fares, the son of Prince Fahad, but after the latter's assassination she had escaped from her husband and established herself in her father's tent. While we were camping at Dmeyr she had married Mishref eben Kurdi, but only five days before she had deserted him and refused to return despite the pressure brought to bear by her father and the pleas of Mishref, who loved her dearly.

At noon on Wednesday another messenger from Nawwaf arrived. He said there was no doubt that Hmud eben Subhan, Eben Rashid's minister at Hayel, had perished by poison. He it was who had saved the boy Saud, a son of Abdalaziz eben Rashid, and had escaped with Saud and his mother, who was Hmud's sister, to Medina, whence he returned in the summer of 1908, killed Prince Saud eben Rashid, and proclaimed as prince his ward, Saud, cousin of the murdered Prince. It was he also who contrived to preserve the remnants of the former domain of Eben Rashid, and from him salvation was expected by all the settlers. At the instigation of his ambitious brother Zamel he had been poisoned two months ago, it was said, but his death had been kept secret and the report spread that he was seriously ill. Now that at last the truth had become generally known, the people were more inclined to join Eben Saud, Eben Rashid's enemy. Nawwaf said that the chiefs of Mared and Khadhne at Jowf were again negotiating with him and that he had also received more favorable news from Skaka. Scheming to intimidate his opponents into submission, he again appealed to his father to march to Jowf and encamp for several days in the vicinity of the city. He commended

the pasture south and southeast of the oasis, saying that the eastern boundary of the Nefud, called Labbe, had been well moistened and promised abundant pasturage.

One afternoon I made a trip to the eastern saddle of the tabular hill of Umm Kur (Figs. 14, 15). I found several blossoming plants and a variety of minerals. The slopes abound in caves in which the Shararat hide stores of which they are not in immediate need. For this concealed property of the Shararat the Rwala, men and women, adults and children, searched daily, taking whatever they found. I discovered several stones with crude images of camels, gazelles, and ibexes, and even one of a lion; but I hunted in vain for inscriptions.

That night the tents of the Prince, of Hmar, and of several others were blown down, but their tenants nevertheless continued to sleep calmly under the upset roofs. Not until the gale blew such a mass of sand upon the roof that they could not breathe did the women crawl out, shake off the sand, and disappear again under the canvas.

AWDE ABU TAYEH

The Prince informed me Friday morning that instead of a raid we should march on Sunday into the vicinity of Jowf. The same day about three o'clock six camel riders dismounted in front of his tent. They were Awde abu Tayeh, head chief of the Hwetat tribe, and his retinue.

The Prince's scribe came to me with the request that I examine the wounded arm of his guest, Awde; so I went to the tent of the Prince where Awde showed me his bandaged right arm. His elbow had been shattered fifty-two days before. The wound had drawn together

Fig. 14

Umm Kur from Nuri's camp

Fig. 15

Umm Kur from the north

Fig. 16

The Prince selects a camp site in a sandy hollow of the Nefud

on the surface, but the arm remained swollen and stiff, and in five places deep scars were visible where he had seared the limb with hot iron. These operations had been of no avail, however, and he complained that the arm was exceedingly painful, especially at night. I invited him into my tent, applied the proper remedy, and instructed him how to attend to it.

The Prince paid me a visit and inquired how I liked the camel meat he had sent me. I thanked him for the bone, and asked his pardon for not being able to thank him for the meat, since scarcely any was left on the bone! He declared that immediately after the fore part of the camel had been skinned he had sent me the entire front leg, and he could not understand, any more than I could, how all the meat had disappeared from the leg on the way from his tent to mine, the intervening distance being about thirty paces.

At first it seemed possible that I could go in the company of Awde to the oasis of Teyma and the burial ground of Mejenne, but after more news of the disturbed conditions there, this plan was regarded as unwise.

"I am confident, Musa," said Nuri, "that a better opportunity will present itself later, perhaps after Nawwaf has captured the oasis and appointed a vice-regent over it."

Reluctantly I had to agree with his arguments and cancel my journey with Awde. The trip to Jowf was postponed because of the visit of Nuri's distinguished guest.

On Monday, March 1, in the afternoon, the camp reverberated with the joyous shouts of the women; for Dhleyyel eben Mejwel, considered dead for some time, had returned. A month earlier he had gone on a raid with many companions against the Aslam tribe of the Sham-

mar. It ended in the capture of many of them, the leader Dhleyyel among them. The Shammar stripped them naked and left them to their fate. Several perished of thirst; the rest wandered about in different directions until Dhleyyel was discovered and brought by two Sleyb to the settlement of Kara, where he took refuge in the house of the chief Zaher eben Selim. Curious juggling of fate! Zaher he had known for several years, and was in love with his sister Zeba, but the father had refused to let them marry. Now the father was dead and her brother granted him—so unexpectedly delivered to them—the hand of his beloved. Dhleyyel immediately married the girl. Here he was again, safe and married. His mother rejoiced and his paternal uncle slaughtered a camel in his honor.

Later I rode with Dawjan to the southern rocks and returned with a fair quantity of specimens.

THIRST IN THE DESERT

We migrated once more in search of water, turning northeastward. There was suddenly a great prancing and stamping among the pack camels and we found that one of them had been pulled down by his own load and had broken his left hind leg. On the left of the narrow path rose a precipitous cliff, while on the right gaped an abyss about thirty yards deep. The slaves were unable to pull him upward and they had too much pity for the wounded beast, which was emitting heart-rending lamentations, to force him downward. There was no alternative but to end his misery on the spot, skin him, disjoint the carcass, and carry the chunks of meat up to where they could be loaded upon other animals. Unable to compel the rest of the camels

to pass their crippled, groaning partner, the slaves sought another path and brought the camels up one by one. We went on ahead.

Later we met some Rwala, who told of a raid on their herds by some Shammar.

"Did they take your tents too?"

"Allah did not permit that. When they fell upon the tents, intending to take them as well, all the women became belligerent. Arming themselves with tent poles, they defended their property and killed several of the Shammar. They were, of course, aided in the combat by the four Rwala left at home who had hidden in the neighboring brush. In that large bush over there sat one, in that long one the second, and the other two were hidden behind these rocks. To the right of us you can see the blood of a Shammari whom our women killed."

"Did you lose the herds?"

"Yes; they drove them all away as their booty."

A gnawed-off skull was lying near our route. It belonged to the slaughtered Shammari. He remained unburied, a prey to rapacious animals and carnivorous birds.

The Prince had occasion to borrow my binoculars. Adjusting them badly, he found them useless, and expressed his scorn of them in no uncertain terms. Like any other Bedouin, the Prince despised a thing the utility of which he did not readily understand or which he did not know how to handle. Thus he had exchanged the first Mannlicher carbine I gave him for an old Turkish army rifle, and the second carbine he had had remodeled to hold only one charge. When, however, after firing several shots at a target he was able to hit the mark every time, he exclaimed with joy:

"By Allah Himself, I have never had a better rifle than

this mother of six shots. Mount your mare, Amer, and hasten to tell Adhub that he may return me the exchanged carbine. If only the report of this rifle were a little louder; it is said that the louder the discharge the more powerful and fatal the shot."

In these cartridges was gray smokeless powder instead of the bad black gunpowder to which Nuri was accustomed.

The children and mares of our Arabs were already suffering from lack of water.

The Rwala are acquainted with hunger and thirst, but they fear the latter more than the former. Water is never wasted and always carefully guarded, especially during a raid.

"On war expeditions or during raids," explained Mindil, "the commander sees that each one obtains an equal amount of water. At sunset he picks up a pebble, places it in a wooden pot, and pours out water until it is immersed. This is each man's share."

"And when the water is exhausted, how do you allay thirst?"

"If hard pressed we kill the fattest camel, cut out the paunch, place it on a cloak, and squeeze the liquid from it into a leather bag, allowing it to cool and settle. We either drink it or, if it is too thick, we suck it into our throats through the nostrils. I, Mindil, have drunk such water on eight occasions and there is nobody among us who has not tasted it at least once."

"What do thirsty travelers on foot do who have no camel to kill?"

"May Allah have mercy on such wretches! Not long ago there were four men from the Bneyye kin who were driven off during a raid. They lost their camels and their weapons and asked Allah to help them escape with their

bare lives. One of them tied a small bag beneath his shirt in which were about fifteen large handfuls of water. They made their way home through the desert, living on various herbs and always drinking a little water after sunset. They protected the water beneath their shirts from sun and wind. On the third day they had about three handfuls left. They were all thirsty and yet each one urged the other to drink, but none would drink because there was not enough water for all. At last they decided to pour it away. They sipped the dew and went for two days without water. By the grace of Allah it happened at the end of the rainy season, when the sun does not scorch. After two days they could go no farther. By the will of Allah some Sleyb found them, brought them liquid butter, poured it into their mouths, and when they could swallow it gave them water also, thus saving their lives. In the autumn and winter a man can go without water for as long as three days, but in midsummer for only one day and one night, or at the most for two nights and one day. On the second day his throat becomes parched and he dies."

In the evening Mhammad had gone with the Prince's slaves for water to Jowf and Naser was besieged at our tent by a stream of women who came to beg some of him. But all had to go empty-handed, for Naser assured them that we ourselves had none.

THEFT

Mhammad had been very impudent and arrogant of late. The Prince spoke to me about him:

"He is a dog I do not trust. Indeed," continued the

Prince, "his insolence even led him to declare in my tent in presence of the chiefs:

" 'I did not seek Musa and I do not seek him now.'

" 'You speak thus before me?' I retorted. 'Allah has sent you these earnings; never before have you fared so well; and now, after you have nurtured yourself somewhat you dare to speak to me thus? Do you not know, dog, that the Sheikh Musa has become one of us, that he belongs to my family, that he is my brother, and that I shall bend anyone who would defy him? You shall serve him as well as he may demand of you for the money he pays you or else I will force you. Were he to cut daily a slice of flesh from your body, you are not to murmur.'

"Thus did I speak to him, brother," said the Prince. "But the scamp is too brazen because he has too much money. Don't you know about it, Musa?"

"I know that he has two or three napoleons [$7.72 or $11.58]."

"Oh, no! Besides these he has more money and has entrusted for safekeeping at least twenty gold pieces to a man I know."

These words instantly explained much that had been dark to me. Mhammad had been hired for me by Hajj Daud as-Salem under the following conditions:

"He shall get four napoleons [$15.44] monthly, he shall sustain himself in Damascus from his wages, he shall likewise buy clothes with his own money. Should you, Musa, be satisfied with him throughout the journey, you shall reimburse him upon his return to Damascus for whatever he has spent for clothing. He is not to take with him into the desert any money and shall not have any private property. Should you find with him, or with any other person, private money belonging to him, you may

drive him away as a dog without giving him his wage."

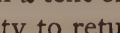
It was upon these conditions that I had accepted him; otherwise he could have cheated me in every transaction and have saved money for himself. When we came from Damascus into the camp of Prince Nuri in Ghuta, he swore to me before Nawwaf that he had but fifteen piasters [67 cents], and again in Dmeyr he swore he had no money. And now the Prince told me that he had deposited twenty napoleons [$77] with a man he knew and was carrying four or five napoleons in his pocket. Where had he obtained this money? The gold I had taken into the desert was hidden among photograph plates, medicines, and poisons, and none of my native escorts were aware of its presence. For the current small expenditures I usually took out a certain amount while changing photograph plates, and this money I carried secreted in my saddlebag upon which I slept and which lay in my round tent. Although this tent was never entered by anybody except the Prince, Nawwaf, Tuman, and Mhammad, I noticed that the money in the bag was disappearing; but as I had caught no one I could suspect no one. Now I had found out who the thief was. Explaining matters to the Prince, I asked him to assist me in dealing with Mhammad.

When the man returned on Tuesday from Jowf, I asked him before witnesses whether he had any private money. He replied that he did not own even a single *para* [0.11 cents], as all he had received for wages he had sent to his family or had used to buy clothing. At that I sent for the Prince and in his presence again asked Mhammad whether he had any private money. He retorted insolently:

"I am not obliged to make explanations to anyone else about my private property. I borrowed fifteen napoleons

in Dmeyr and took them with me into the desert and in Miyadhin I borrowed ten more, in order to be independent of your good will."

At the Prince's order Naser examined Mhammad's saddlebag and found in it many things we had missed; whereupon the Prince declared that he should keep the gold which Mhammad had deposited with a certain man until he proved where and how he had earned it. He then ordered Mhammad to leave my tent instantly and never show himself near us again. Thus I lost the last servant whom my friends in Damascus had recommended. Gentlemen in Damascus do not know the desert, and neither do their men; for it is one thing to sojourn a few days in Damascus expecting recompense and quite a different thing to stay in the desert buying and watching camels. Mhammad was to remain in a tent on the edge of the camp until he had an opportunity to return to his homeland.



HUNTING FOR PASTURAGE

On Tuesday we advanced in a northerly direction. The Arabs were hungry and thirsty, but in many tents no baking or cooking could be done because there was no water. They subsisted merely on camel's milk and even that was scarce.

The next morning the herdsmen drove the camels, which had not drunk since the preceding Wednesday, to Jowf, each man taking along a handful of wheat or flour to give as a reward to the settlers of Jowf for drawing the water. Our herdsman Mufazzi also loaded on four water bags to be filled.

The Prince asked me to prepare a remedy for "the

girl," meaning his young wife. She was feverish, he said, wanted to drink frequently, and rejected every lotion. I prepared a pleasant drink and sent it to her by the negro Hmar. As we sat there together the Prince recited many ditties and poems to us, which Jwad and I jotted down. I was much interested in the manner in which he defended the originality of particular words and refused to concede that Jwad's version might be better; for the latter also knew many poems and songs but frequently differed with the Prince as to the position of the words and as to the phraseology.

"Even if that word does fit better there, still it does not belong there," the Prince would declare. "As I say it, thus I have learned it, and I do not wish that anything be changed."

On Thursday evening I visited Nuri's sick wife as she lay in the tent of her mother, her whole body and even her head covered with two wool coats. She would not even let me hold her hand to take her pulse, nor would she show her tongue, but kept complaining of thirst and of pain in her joints. At my question as to whether she had taken the drug I had sent her, her mother informed me that the girl's sisters had taken it instead; tasting the medicine and finding it pleasant, they had swallowed it all before she could administer it to the sick one. Thereupon I put a salicylic powder into a lemonade and directed the mother to administer it to her daughter in my presence.

Toward evening the camels returned from the watering place. Mufazzi had brought water, but such water! It was yellow and had the stench of putrefaction. And we were to drink it! Mufazzi excused himself by saying that the Prince would drink the same water, for his servants had filled their bags from the same pool.

Meantime the Prince was insisting that Nawwaf leave Jowf and return to him. But Nawwaf refused to come. Moreover, he persisted in asking his father for money, ammunition, and flour, while the latter, much incensed, kept despatching to Jowf one messenger after another. Nawwaf continued to beg to be allowed to remain in Jowf, to be supplied with food and ammunition, and asked to have his mother and his boy Sultan sent to him. I interceded for him, entreating the Prince to fulfill the wish of his good son; but it was a long time before he would promise even to consider it.

On Saturday morning I was awakened by the grumbling of camels, disgruntled because loads were being placed on their backs. We were to migrate again in search of pasturage; we had not found an abundant grazing place in the last five months.

Before our departure I heard two camels both whining for the same young one. At the Prince's order the negro Dale had just slaughtered a young weak-boned camel, which had been allowed to suck the udders of two mothers in order that both of them might yield milk. As the cruel Dale had not driven the camels away but had killed their suckling before their very eyes, they stood there over the young victim, writhing in its last agony, and wailed at the wrong the cruel man had perpetrated upon their beloved. The real mother would try to drive away the other one by biting her and then would return to her offspring, lick its legs, lift it by the back, and wail piteously when it fell back again to the ground. The foster mother would come back and wail with her, and as fast as they were driven away they would return by the shortest route. Finally Dale pulled some skin off the young camel's back, buried the body in the sand, and rubbed the skin on the

noses and heads of both camels; which then, being thus attracted by the scent of their child, followed the slayer willingly.

ABU-D-DHUR

We rode northeastward toward the settlement of Kara, proceeding in a vast plain covered with coarse gravel. Far to the west and east the herds of camels surged on like waves, and between them were innumerable animals carrying tents, supplies, and litters. In the center of this far-flung though rather thin line, tossing to and fro upon the back of a bay camel, moved the litter called Abu-d-Dhur [1] which represents the sacred palladium of the entire tribe.

The Rwala have no flag of their own. They go on raids without any special device; but when waging a war, whether of aggression or defense, that endangers the whole tribe, they take with them a special kind of litter, called Markab or Abu-d-Dhur (Fig. 17). The Markab is constructed of stout poles tied together in a rectangle. All the poles are wrapped round with ostrich feathers and to the upper poles are tied twelve short pegs with plumes of bent ostrich feathers. Said the Prince:

"Abu-d-Dhur, Father of Indefinite Periods of Time, is the name given to our litter, because it is inherited from generation to generation, from age to age, and because it will last forever. It forms the visible token of princely power, and therefore this litter remains in my tent all the time, in the part of the tent reserved for women; here it is guarded day and night, by me and my slaves, against everybody and especially against my nearest kinsmen. For

[1] *D* and *h* in *Dhur* pronounced separately, somewhat as in "add her."

if a revolt breaks out in our kin against the prince the opponents try, first of all, to snatch the Abu-d-Dhur away from him, as he who has this emblem of the whole tribe in his possession must be recognized as their prince. Should the enemy at war with us succeed in capturing the Abu-d-Dhur, the respect for it would be entirely lost, and we should not use it again."

To carry this litter when the tribe migrates, an especially strong and docile camel, usually one of white color, is selected. The animal then, as a rule, walks between the laden camels and the herds, thus forming the center of all the migrating families. When attacked by an enemy in force on the march, the best fighters at once surround the Abu-d-Dhur to protect it. If it seems that the enemy will push back the fighters who are resisting the attack and that he will break through to the pack camels, the commander of the chosen troop of fighters who defend the litter will take the camel carrying this symbol by the rein and lead her at the head of his troop against the enemy. This troop is accompanied by girls seated on she-camels, who encourage the men to persevere, and behind them follow women who threaten to beat to death anyone who deserts the Abu-d-Dhur and flees. So far no enemy has succeeded in defeating the Rwala sufficiently to take the Abu-d-Dhur away from them. The Prince, it must be said, is very prudent—the more dangerous the region, the nearer together stand the tents of the various camps.

"Do you take the Abu-d-Dhur with you when going on raids?"

"We never do so," explained Mindil, "except when we engage in a war, in which we move with all our herds and tents into the enemy's territory. The camel carrying

the Abu-d-Dhur walks at the head of the whole tribe, surrounded by warriors who follow every movement of the animal with the closest attention, for Allah gives signs by means of the Abu-d-Dhur from which the outcome of the fight can be foretold. Sometimes in a dead calm the ostrich feathers adorning the Abu-d-Dhur begin to flutter. At other times the litter leans to the right or left, then suddenly straightens itself, remains quietly upright, and then rocks a few times from side to side. All this happens by the power of Allah. He sends us help from the litter, where He seats Himself for a while. The waving of the feathers and the straigthening of the Abu-d-Dhur are signs that Allah has touched it with His power. After each victory we kill a camel before the Abu-d-Dhur in honor of Allah. We do this every year, even if we have had no war to which the Abu-d-Dhur had to be taken."

The Abu-d-Dhur projected far above the horizon on the level plain. All about us riders on camels were pressing ahead, while behind, like huge butterflies, the women's vari-colored litters rose and fell in the heavy air. Young camels were bleating, old female ones were whining, the males grunting; children were crying and women were shouting to each other and to the camels carrying their belongings; herdsmen were attempting to lead on the animals in their care by singing a short melody, the last syllable of which they prolonged indefinitely; riders were galloping from one side to the other on horses or camels; and above the whole tumult the hot, almost impenetrable air hung in horizontal strata.

Awde began singing the song of a young girl who had kept urging her kin to avenge her father's death.

"The new moon rises, the tale is told;
Clear are their words now—no vague surmises.

Begone, avengers! ill have ye done
Not to comfort those so eagerly waiting.
I see birds of prey circling above you,
Longing for big and fat ones for supper.
Cut, e'er it dull, with keen edge of the blade
Before your foes make you atone for their dead.
Mourning o'er you are fair ones, adorned with tattooing,
You are their veil; they must not remain naked.
Reject not my tidings, or woe to you, woe!
Sacrificed for the dead you will be, by Allah!
Grow prudent now and take counsel together,
For an enemy cannot be struck like a snake.
I fear 'twill be said: 'By our foes are they dead,
The mounts seized with a child bound close to each head.' "

We paused a while at the Kheyf Hajal (Fig. 18), the remains of a sandstone hill resembling an enormous mushroom, upon the stem and head of which we noted several inscriptions which I jotted down. These inscriptions, carved eighteen centuries ago on the stem and under side of the cap by nomadic merchants, had been chiseled by the sands ever since and yet to this day are quite legible. How many scores of thousands of years before that must the sand have been gnawing at the rock in order to shape it to the Boletus of the present!

The Prince urged a speedy departure, for an oppressive, unbearable heat prevailed and we still suffered from thirst. At last we reached the settlement of Kara with its palm gardens.

As soon as I was off my camel a young Arab came up to show me his right wrist where he had been bitten by a snake. Cutting his wound, I ordered him to suck out the blood; then I daubed the wound with sal ammoniac and later gave him a generous glass of cognac from my store.

He shuddered, unable to stand the burning of this unaccustomed drink, and had barely finished the glass when he lay down, fell asleep, and broke into a sweat. Thereupon his relatives, not having much faith in my manner of healing, summoned a sorcerer who murmured unintelligible words over him for a long time and the next day claimed the cure.

TO THE STONY DESERT

The following day we moved on. The burning southeast wind was filling the air with innumerable films of heat that made breathing difficult. The temperature had reached 99.5° F. in the shade, and this wind made it unbearable. The sand was so hot that it burned my bare feet smartly when I touched it.

To the north extended the precipitous scarp at the foot of which lie the famous wells of Swer. Their water is the surest and best in a far territory. I called to mind the misfortune that befell Bleyhan's brother here. After a successful raid, Jian and four youths lost their way through carelessness. All night and all morning they drove their herds without striking the trail. By noon they knew each other no more, such was the thirst torturing them. The others saved themselves by abandoning their booty and their mares, and hurrying on, but Jian exclaimed:

"By Allah, I will die before I desert my mare!"

And taking the reins of the abandoned mares in his right hand he rode slowly in the tracks of his comrades. The heat of the day passed, the sun had already gone down in the west, and he was still in the saddle. At night he stuck to the course he had followed in the daytime.

Seeing himself thus isolated, he was seized with a terrible fear. The torments caused by thirst became well-nigh unbearable, and he heard a buzzing in his ears. After resting a little he rode on. Then he let the reins of the mares drop, twisted his hand into the mane of his own mount, laid his head on her neck, and rode as if asleep. When the dew had passed, he slid down from the saddle, spread his mantle over the perennials, and lay down under it. He thought he must surely die. But his mare licked his face, and this refreshed him a little. Rising from the ground and mounting again, he wearily resumed his journey. The mare still carried him faithfully and finally brought him to the nearest water, the wells of Barrit, where she stopped. The wells were entirely deserted. Rolling down from the saddle, he crawled, rather than walked, to the nearest well. He saw water there but had neither rope nor bucket. He thought of throwing himself down the well, but this Allah did not permit. He fell asleep or fainted—he was never sure which—and remained lying beside the well. In the meantime some Sleyb had been hired to take water with them and go in search of him. Finding his tracks they followed them and before long came to the place where he was lying unconscious. They opened his mouth and dropped melted butter down his throat until he swallowed it and regained consciousness, but it was nearly two days before he could sit in the saddle unaided. The Sleyb received five she-camels as a reward.

After noon we built a new camp and none too soon, for I was shaking with a violent fever. I remained lying under a *ghaza* bush until my companions came with the load and then I mixed and drank a large bowl of sugared water which caused my thirst to abate somewhat.

Fig. 17

Abu-d-Dhur

The next day we were on the march again. Suddenly seventeen strange riders were sighted.

Instantly eight warriors of the Prince's entourage swung upon their horses to pursue or capture them.

"Before you overtake them, agree about the booty and take care that the enemy shoots none of the mares," the Prince shouted after them as they darted off. He appeared to be more worried about the mares than about his son Saud and several of his close relatives who were in pursuit.

We encamped at Zhaltat al-Mkharuk on Thursday, March 17.

On Thursday and Friday I had taken neither food nor drink of any kind. I took no interest in my work, a symptom that caused me to fear a serious illness. Still I resisted it. I dragged myself, led by Tuman and Awde, to the southern crest of an oblong sandstone hill to make a map of the vicinity. I was obliged to lie down several times to gain energy enough to finish the map.

Rain came at last. Whenever it stopped for a bit the children ran out and waded about in the puddles, splashing each other and shouting with glee when one of them fell down and got wet. The women dipped up the water and filled the bags with it. Water for the Prince was taken from the place where the camels rested and so, of course, was full of dung. A few paces farther on there was pure water a-plenty but the slaves were too lazy to carry the bags through the mire to get it.

On Saturday I was not able to sit up. The Prince came every hour to enquire after my health. We were to leave that morning, but fearing that I should not be able to endure the saddle—in fact, fearing I might die—he ordered the Arabs, even after they had begun to strike the tents in the morning, to repitch them, saying we should

stay there a while longer. Arabs kept coming to my large tent from all directions to ask Naser whether I still breathed.

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RAIDS

EARLY Sunday morning, March 21, I fell asleep for the first time after six successive sleepless nights; but as early as four o'clock I was awakened by the roaring of disgruntled camels that were being loaded with the Prince's effects. As there was no pasturage anywhere in the vicinity the Prince, hearing that I had slept somewhat during the night, decided that we must go on. When I came out of the tent everything seemed to whirl around and I had to sit down hurriedly to keep from falling. The air was clear and pure, birds were singing; but the blood pulsed in my temples, there was a film over my eyes, a buzzing in my ears, a cutting pain in my bowels, and I was tortured by an insatiable thirst.

Nuri was bent on finding a new camp site to the northeast in the upland of Amghar, but his relatives insisted there was no pasturage there and urged him to go to Labbe. Nuri was obstinate, however, and held to the plan of going to Amghar. As a result of this dispute, the chiefs and their clans, as well as even his nearest kinsmen, left him, turning toward the southeast in the direction of Labbe. Our party was thus reduced to the Prince, his slaves, his son Saud, and myself. A short time after the others had left we were overtaken by a young son-in-law of the Prince, Mishref eben Kurdi, who reproached his father in terse but vigorous words for braving great danger because of his obstinacy, and exhorted him to follow the others. The Prince thereupon swerved his camel toward

the southeast and we went whither the rest of the clan was bound, to Labbe.

Prince Nuri attempted to divert me and rid me of my depression. He told me of the terrific fight between Muhammad eben Rashid, head chief in Nejd, and Nuri's father, which finally resulted in binding them together in friendship. The thing that had roused the Rwala to successful combat against Eben Rashid was the sight of some camel calves a few weeks old wailing piteously for their mothers in a looted camp. As their mothers had been captured, the calves were threatened with death. This sad sight so moved the Rwala warriors that they paraded one after another before the young animals, shouted their war cry, and encouraged one another with the words: "O thou little camel! listen to glad tidings of thy mother!"

"When Muhammad eben Rashid returned to his people and learned the extent of the losses we had caused him, he sent his friends to my father with the following message:

"'I swear by Allah, O Hazza eben Shalan, that as long as I live I will be your comrade, the friend of your friend and the enemy of your enemy!'

"In this manner Eben Rashid and his tribesmen became our friends and comrades, just as if they were related to us by blood. Whenever Eben Rashid wished to undertake a dangerous raid he asked the help of Eben Shalan, who then either went with him in person or sent him his Rwala with some other commander. All that was captured by Eben Shalan he kept for himself and his troops. Eben Rashid never shared with his ally, because Eben Shalan was independent.

Passing by the clans that had preceded us, we overtook a company of women, some sitting in cage-like litters examining their garments intently, others planted astride

full water bags, darning clothes and joking with the men who passed by. Three or four were singing with agreeable voices:

"Ah, how beautiful your arms, O Sita,
With blue tattoo marks!
How beautiful the noise of the attacks of your kin,
And the sabers blood-dyed as if with henna.
How prettily your camel is rising to its feet
Adorned with gay ornaments.
O Sita, hailing on both sides from brave ancestors!
The one sire camped in the places most dangerous,
The other hurled down riders with his lance."

Sita was Nuri's wife. They praised her in order to please him.

After resting a while at the southern edge of the Khashm al-Mkharuk, we turned northeastward.

The Prince cantered off and as he did not return soon, I myself designated the camp site. When the Prince came he reproached me for having encamped so early and even then wanted to resume the march; but the Arabs—nay, even his own slaves—unwilling to reload, refused to obey. All I wanted was to rest.

On Wednesday we were joined on the march by Khaled, son of Sattam.

He was making excuses for an unsuccessful raid and trying to explain why he could not resist or evade the enemy, when I interrupted him with:

"Allah be praised that all of you have returned well. Allah had predetermined the events."

The Prince was unpleasantly affected by my words and reproached Khaled for his imprudence.

"Woe to the Bedouin who depends upon Allah," he

declared. "Allah would have no rest were He to straighten out all the trouble that an imprudent man causes. We alone shape our fate, Allah the reason and time for it."

We encamped the same day in the stone dale of Faj as-Slubi.

Trad, the half-brother of Khaled, departed for Jowf to join Nawwaf, against the will of Nuri, whose wrath toward his son was constantly growing. Before his departure Trad asked me to prevail upon Nuri to support his son, else he would miserably perish in Jowf; but when I tried it the Prince retorted:

"Nawwaf went to Jowf against my will. Let him now do what he pleases."

To which I replied: "That he may do what he pleases, send him money and ammunition," whereupon the Prince smiled but remained silent.

On Thursday I felt so much better that I resumed my topographical work.

All the next day I worked with the Slubi Faraj, extending my geographical map to the southeast of the Nefud. Having determined the cardinal points exactly, he proceeded to draw in the sand within my tent hills, valleys, and wells, piling up sand for the ranges and mesas, scooping it out for the valleys, and marking the individual wells by circular dips. He did not show the distances, but was precise in his designation of the respective directions. The map finished, I questioned him as to the distances between the various places. These he explained in terms of daily marches, estimating, for example, whether or not it would be possible for Arabs migrating from locality A to locality B to reach their destination the same day. At the same time, he took into account whether they were migrating in winter, when they can make at the utmost

twelve miles, or in summer, when they can make fifteen and a half miles if they travel from sunrise to sunset. Shorter distances are determined by the space traversed during a migration lasting from morning to noon or from morning, when dew falls, to mid-forenoon, when it dries.

When determining the distance to a particular watering place one may arrive at the desired information more easily by asking whether the camels are driven from camp A to the watering place B in the morning, watered, and taken back without making stops (12 miles); or whether they do not reach the watering place until afternoon, pass the night there, and return the next day (18 miles); or whether they pass the night some distance from the watering place, do not reach it until the next day, pass the second night beyond the watering place, and return to the camp the third day (28 miles). A more specific determination of distance or time is unknown to a Bedouin.

When I dismissed Faraj that evening, my map contained many new place-names and my tent was full of yellow lice.

Saturday, March 27, was migrating day. We went on our way to the south-southwest to Khisht ath-Thor. We were fully armed for we expected an attack from the Shammar.

HORRIBLE PREDICTIONS

On Monday the Prince came and notified me that we should not continue farther in the same direction as he wished to be near his son Nawwaf in the vicinity of Jowf. So I told him that I would immediately undertake a new expedition. He tried to dissuade me from it. He cited the perils that threatened me, but I answered that it was the

will of Allah that I should undertake this journey and that I must not resist. Therefore we sought a Dahamshi who would be able to protect me from his co-tribesmen, the enemies of the Rwala.

Hmar brought me a Dahamshi called Taresh eben Melfi of the Mheyne clan. He did not greatly appeal to me. He limped, was blind in the left eye, and his upper incisors protruded from his mouth. According to the notion of the Bedouins, these attributes are not favorable omens. But he was a Mheyni, a member of a foremost Dahamshe family, and I had no other choice.

Meantime I had quite a to-do finding a guide. The Sleyb all seemed to be in league together to force me into paying exorbitant wages. Finally I succeeded in getting a Slubi called Mizel akhu Zaëla, at one *mejidiyye* a day. The Prince admonished him to serve me honestly, to respond to every gesture of mine, and to guard my camels.

I then settled accounts with Mhammad.

After a conference with the Prince in which he recommended that I indict Mhammad before the Turkish Government, I decreed that I would let him have the gold he had stolen from me but would not pay him the three gold pounds ($13.58) due on his wages that he had not yet drawn. Thus, instead of being punished, he profited from the robbery to the extent of seventeen pounds. He was satisfied and agreed that he had received all that he was entitled to. I reserved the right to prefer charges against him with the Turkish authorities should he provoke me. One of his families was in Baghdad, the other in Deyr on the Euphrates, while he himself often stayed in Damascus and other cities, where he could easily be arrested and imprisoned by the Government.

After Mhammad's departure I began to prepare the

supplies for the contemplated trip. Suddenly, as I was taking provisions out of a bag, I heard the hissing of a snake and a viper darted out from underneath. Being barefooted, I leaped aside in a panic; but the snake was killed by Naser. It was eleven inches long, as thick as one's finger, and on the head over the eyes it had two excrescences.

This was the third viper that had threatened me on this journey.

Toward evening the Prince came again and repeatedly asked me to be careful and mindful of my safety.

"Had I known, my brother, that you would undertake such raids, I would not have allowed you to pitch your tent alongside mine," he protested. "I know not a single man among us who would be as daring as you and, by Allah, I speak the truth. You say that Allah has prompted you to undertake such raids. Well, what Allah has ordained, let it be; but what should I say to your friends in Damascus were I not to bring you to them? I have promised them to protect you, but how am I to protect you when you forsake me and venture into lands which I myself dare not enter without a convoy of at least a thousand fighters? There, in the place where you now want to go, lie in wait for you a Shammari, a Muntefizhi, a Zefiri, and besides these, various robbers of the Dahamshe, Amarat, Fedan, Sbaa, Shararat, and Dleym tribes. They may murder you in the night without regard to your Dahamshi. Still you refuse to obey. I talk to you, I try to restrain you, because I know those perils better than you do, but you ignore my words. Do you have no pity for your relatives? Your family? Is there nobody among those living where your relatives camp who loves you, who would be grieved to lose you?

"I know what you wish to reply—that I myself make raids. It is true, but I am accompanied by hundreds and hundreds of fighters. And who are your escorts? Tuman, who knows not the country nor the people nor their language, and no one besides but two strange men unknown to you who may betray you at any moment or kill you. For who knows what the devil may tempt them to? And you know the perils that the land itself is fraught with. This year Allah has not sent heavy rains into the territories of the Wudiyan and the Hamad. For days of marching you will not find any water. You say you will take water along; but what will you do if the camels that carry your full water bags should stumble or rub against a sharp rock and the bag be ripped and the water run out? Maybe you could even kill your camels and clean the water that their bellies contain and drink that; but what then would become of you if you had no animal to carry you?" Thus he spoke, long and tenderly. The good Nuri was my friend and loved me sincerely. But, since it was known throughout the desert that I moved before his face, under his protection, he also feared that his prestige would be impaired should I perish in the desert.

On Monday, March 29, 1909, I was awakened by the grumbling of my own camels and was told by Naser that we were again migrating. After a while the Prince came, barefooted and coatless, bringing me a bowlful of camel's milk. He said that I might begin my journey immediately.

VII. IN THE HEART OF ARABIA DESERTA

THE ROVING POET

The Arabs, all but the Prince and his guard, had started southward; little was left on the old camp site at Khisht ath-Thor but my men, my camels, and my baggage. The Prince with his fifteen slaves hurriedly helped us load, but in spite of the best intentions they bungled everything. Things intended for the expedition were crammed into the bags that were to be left with the Prince, and a fine task it was to find all the mislaid articles and reload them upon the camels that were to go with us. The Slubi advised my taking the two smallest water bags since he knew all the secret wells and would bring me to water every day.

"Why, are there wells even in the Hamad?"

"By Allah, they are there, but known only to us, the Sleyb. I will take you to them. There you may refresh yourself and your camels."

Finally, when the necessary things seemed to be loaded, I mounted my camel and rode up to the Prince to thank him and to ask him to watch over my tent and my property. He extended his right hand to me in silence, mounted the saddle, and rode off with his retinue toward the south. I turned to the north.

All but the most essential articles, even the small round tent and the blankets, were left behind with Naser. We were lightly clothed for the Prince had said:

"It is hot; you need not worry about cold or steady rain. Why overburden the camels?"

Of the four camels, Tuman's and mine carried riding saddles, the third the water saddle, and the fourth the pack saddle. The third one also carried Taresh, and the fourth Mizel. Both men were talkative and kept assuring me that we need not fear anybody as they had acquaintances far and wide among the Bedouins. Said Taresh:

"I will protect you, Sheikh Musa, not merely from the Dahamshe and Amarat, but even from the Shammar, and will render accurate accounts of the clans and camps of these tribes."

Mizel swore: "By Allah himself, Musa, to whom may Allah grant a long life, I know the entire desert from Nejd to Aleppo as thoroughly as I know my palm. Thank Allah, O long lived one, that you have chosen me instead of Sanad, as there is no other man among the Sleyb to surpass me in knowledge of topography." To which I replied:

"I know both men of words and men of action. May you and Taresh belong among the latter and not among the former."

We kept as much as possible in the depressions to avoid attack. An Amari soon joined us and continued to travel with us.

While still in camp I had found out that my guide Mizel akhu Zaëla was a roving poet, and on the journey he boasted that there was no eminent chief among the Bedouins whom he had not visited and in whose honor he had not composed a poem. In a high-pitched voice he kept declaiming one poem after another, in a manner that reminded me vividly of our chanting of the psalms. He sang only the first and the last word of a verse, stretching

out the latter and garnishing it with various trills; the other words he pronounced rapidly, laying stress upon the most prominent ones only. Five or ten times he would repeat the verses that appealed to his fancy. I told him to stop his continuous declaiming as I had heard similar poems many times before. This offended him deeply. With great earnestness he tried to convince me that he had no equal among the living poets, while of the dead he considered no one greater except Adwani, that is to say the chief, Nimr eben Adwan, and this was because he composed long poems. If he was not singing, he was telling tales.

Shortly after noon we came to some sand hills, called Tleylat al-Hdad, that represent the boundary between two families of the Sleyb. The latter claim ownership of some portions of the desert and know exactly to what family every valley and slope belongs. When a man wishes to marry off his son and seeks a wife for him he does not pay for her but gives to her father or brother a portion of his property. From that time on only the father or brother of the girl is allowed to hunt or to pasture his herds there, and he may eject any other hunter or herdsman.

Here we found clear crystal salt and not far away was the tent of Turkiyye.

Turkiyye, the widow of Prince Sattam and mother of three married sons who had children of their own, remained the most influential of the Rwala women. Her word was law. Guests were spoken of as quartered not with Khaled, the eldest son of Sattam to whom the tent belonged, but with his mother Turkiyye. Even my versatile poet, Mizel akhu Zaëla, had composed a poem in praise of her generosity. Several had told me that Turkiyye used

to receive from her husband Sattam a hundred *mejidiyyat* ($90) monthly, and that she required as much from her son; yet even the hundred *mejidiyyat* were insufficient for her. As Khaled's income by no means equaled that of his father, he begged his mother to be more economical.

"I have never learned to save and I never will as long as I live," replied Turkiyye, whereupon she went to quarter herself in the tent of her slave. Khaled and the other sons—nay, even the Prince and the chiefs—had to go after her and beg for a long time before she would return. Then of course Khaled had no alternative but to guarantee the regular payment of the hundred *mejidiyyat* a month. As to where he was to get the money his mother did not concern herself. Not a day passed, it is said, when Turkiyye did not entertain guests. In the woman's partition she served meals daily to at least fifteen women and usually she prepared the meals from the stores of her sons. Frequently she invited men as well, and after supper would come into the compartment for men, choose the foremost seat, and monopolize the conversation. Nobody, not even the Prince himself, dared to argue with her!

THE HIGH ART OF COOKING

We continued in a northeasterly direction and in the afternoon reached a well half filled with water from the last rain. In vain we searched for our canvas bucket. Finally, as we were badly in need of water, I took the small bag of waterproof cloth in which I had wrapped my photographic plates. It was torn in two places, but I applied a round pebble to each hole, bound the cloth round it, and a bucket was provided. My native companions watched me

skeptically; they were certain the water would escape from my cloth pail. My only answer was to tie the bucket to a rope twelve yards long, insert a tin bowl in it and direct Mizel to go down the well. Taresh and the Amari held the rope while Mizel descended and dipped up the water into the pail with the bowl. When it was half full they pulled it out and poured the water into a waterproof blanket that we had spread over a dip in the sand. The camels drank eagerly. After filling the water bags we also filled the improvised bucket so as to have a supply for supper. Not a drop had leaked out; the bucket really was waterproof. My fellows wondered at it and admitted that even a leather bag was not always as tight.

Toward evening we came to a secluded depression where there were a few plants for our camels to graze upon. The Amari watched the camels, Taresh grubbed dry bushes, Tuman sketched a map of the environs and adjusted the watches and barometers, while Mizel and I prepared supper. By a lucky chance Tuman had discovered our canvas bucket among the scientific instruments where some obliging slave had tucked it. We were glad to see it; our improvised cloth bag in which we had carried the water we needed for another purpose: we had no other receptacle in which to mix the dough for bread! Our shallow pan must have been left behind and Mizel declared he could not bake bread without it. I dug a small hole in the ground, laid the waterproof cloth over it, put upon it five handfuls of flour and some salt, placed the bowl of water near by, and ordered Mizel to mix the dough. Without washing his dirty hands he poured the water upon the flour and kneaded the dough. Meantime I picked up three stones all of equal size and about six inches high, stood them up in the form of a triangle near the fire, poured

water into the kettle, set it on the stones, and fed the fire. Mizel soon got tired of kneading the dough and asked Taresh to go on with the work, saying that he would watch the camels instead. Taresh knelt down by the bowl and with the words "In Allah's name" resumed the kneading with his own dirty hands. Mizel did not like to stay with the camels either, so he squatted by the fire and asked me to let him feed it.

When the water was boiling we threw into it four handfuls of peeled wheat and let it cook over a slow fire. With some of the coals we built a bigger fire near by. When this had burned out Mizel raked up the smoldering ashes and Taresh brought the dough, tossing it up with his left hand and slapping it with his right to make it wider and thinner until he had shaped it into a cake about twelve inches in diameter and one in thickness. Then he threw it skillfully on part of the ashes and with a stick raked the rest over it. The fire flamed all around the cake, upon which Taresh kept raking fresh hot ashes. After a quarter of an hour he turned it over and ten minutes later Mizel pulled it out of the ashes, tapped it with a stick, and threw it before me. The bread was baked. Out of a small leather bag Tuman poured some butter on the peeled wheat, and our supper was ready. My native companions ate with great relish, kneading large dumplings from the wheat, cramming them one after another into their mouths and filling the free spaces with bread. In a few minutes the bread and the wheat were gone. The men licked their fingers and wiped their hands in the sand.

Dawn had barely come when I was awakened by Taresh who had planted himself near my head, was coughing, yawning and casting off all his parasites upon me while he sang his morning prayer. Had he but prayed! I ordered

him and Mizel to release the camels for pasture; but Taresh devoted himself to his prayer, while Mizel absented himself because of necessity. Meantime, I freed the camels myself. Tuman kindled a fire, poured water into the coffee kettle, and ground the roasted coffee. When the kettle began to steam and the aroma of the coffee spread, Taresh finished his prayer and Mizel his necessity. After breakfast they were so clumsy about the loading that Tuman and I had to do all the work.

We deviated more to the northward on Tuesday, March 30. We were traversing the Hejera, a stony, monotonous district. It is no wonder raids are frequent, for here, when it has rained enough, camp many clans of unrelated tribes. Since 1905 there had been insufficient rain in the Hejera. For that reason the Bedouins had not gone there of late.

My camel suddenly began to plunge and leap, frightened by a large lizard that had run in front of her. The Amari jumped off his camel, pursued the lizard, and seizing it by its scaly tail brought it back to us slung over his mantle. It was thirty inches long and at its belly eight inches wide; under the belly it was yellowish white and on its back grayish. Its spine and tail were scaly. Taresh thrust it into the bag upon which we prepared our dough. It was destined to be roasted and eaten.

Suddenly we sighted two gazelles. Mizel, who boasted that no gazelle could escape him, seized his long flint musket and rushed after them. A full half hour later he returned breathless and coughing—without the gazelles.

While our camels were grazing upon blooming *mharut* we dug up three roots of it. These were of the thickness of a hand, fifteen to twenty-four inches long, with a black rind. Mizel discarded two of them, explaining that they were males and had a bitter taste; the third root, a female, we took along.

Fig. 18

At the Kheyf Hajal

Fig. 19

The Tawil Range

Southwest of the hill of Khonsor we found a small verdant meadow. Here we settled ourselves for a tasty meal. Tuman verified the time by comparing our chronometers with the results of our observations on the meridian passages of some stars and I collected plants while Mizel baked the lizard and the *mharut* root. First he cut the lizard's throat and built a large fire. When the fire was burning fairly well he raked the coals aside, dug a deep pit near by, and scraped into it some of the coals and ashes. On these he laid the lizard, covered it with earth, and made a fire on top. He pushed the root near the fire, turned it over twice and the lizard thrice and when the bread was baked and the peeled wheat cooked he was ready to lay before me the root and the lizard. We broke the root into several pieces. Underneath the black rind was a white edible substance with a somewhat pungent taste and as dry as flour. Mizel sliced the lizard and proffered me the best parts from the tail; he himself enjoyed the bowels. The meat I ate was composed of very many thin, tough skins superimposed one on another like sheets of paper and tasting somewhat like the meat of the crawfish. At first I abhorred the sight of the lizard, but later, when the vision of it had left my mind, I indulged in the meat with relish. My native escorts ate the cooked meal and bread, and while Tuman and I ascertained the latitude they finished the lizard.

At Nuri's camp I had let it be known that we should go to the wells of Sammit and we actually did start in that direction. I spread this information in order to deceive the Sleyb and other strangers in our camp, lest they communicate the direction and goal of my journey to some robber band or raiding party. As a matter of fact, however, I had no intention of going to Sammit, as the enemy bands there were too dangerous, while had I continued on to

Barrit and Shethatha I should have approached settlements governed by the Turks, who would have greeted me affably enough but would have forbidden me to return into the desert since they would have been held responsible for my safety. Therefore, I made up my mind to proceed through the center of the territory of Wudiyan and leave the above-mentioned localities on the right. I could reach them more easily later from Irak. My task was the exploration of the inner desert.

When I learned from Mizel that we might reach Sammit within a day and a half, I asked him where the nearest water to the north was to be found. He replied that we were sure to find water in the valley of Arar; so I declared that we would proceed in that direction; whereupon Mizel advised me:

"O thou to whom Allah grant a long life, place the pole star before the eyebrow of the right eye of your camel and, with the help of God, proceed in that direction (that is, toward the north-northwest)."

Mizel loved to try to flatter me. He would either address me as "Sheikh Musa" or "Thou to whom Allah grant a long life."

The Amari inquired whether I should go from the valley of Arar to the wells of Barrit; to which I replied that only Allah knew.

"And I, what shall I do?" he faltered.

"I did not ask you to ride with me. Pour out two bowls of water into your small bag, take some bread and, under the protection of Allah, you will come whither you would be. We have done but good to you."

"By Allah," interrupted Taresh, "Musa is not lying."

"Be good to us withal," I adjured the Amari, "and make no mention of us before friend or enemy."

The Amari gave his promise and in the bright moonlit night took his departure toward the northeast. Half an hour later we came into the wide, shallow lowland of the Ab-al-Kur valley (Fig. 20). Now it was bare and empty; in the time of plenty it had been crowded with herds and Bedouins.

Day had followed day without incident. One night I had had but little sleep, having unluckily quartered myself upon a nest of large ants. The nest was in a crack in the ground and the ants entered my bed through a small opening which I had failed to notice. Toward midnight I was awakened by their attacks and I had to seek another place. This was simple enough but it was not so simple to rid myself of the ants that had invaded my clothing and blankets. They were biting me so ferociously that I felt as if I had been rolling in nettles. For over two hours I knelt in the bright moonlight picking off the ants.

Once a gray fox, white under the belly, fled before us. My companions greeted it with joy as a good omen to the traveler. We passed through many small, grassy meadows, with signs of recent rain. Our camels devoured the grasses in big bunches without stopping to chew them. Taresh was of the opinion that should such favorable weather and pasturage prevail during the rest of the journey the animals would fatten and return broader than they were long. But this was not to last.

Farther on a cold north wind started to blow and penetrated to the bones, for we were clad lightly, with our bare breasts exposed. Vainly I enveloped myself in the only cloak I had taken with me, a light summer mantle. Only the summer sun could comfort us; but the sky was overcast. We rode into the Khabari al-Mbowjiyyat.

The atmosphere grew almost sultry. The wind had

ceased and there hung over the great, gray desert quiescent, horizontal layers of air, like curtains, that gave me such a feeling of oppression that I gasped for breath. Everything around us was ashen gray; in the distance, however, the surface of the desert looked reddish. Above the level elevations hung exceedingly long strips of some subtle matter, while the depressions resembled lakes out of which only the solitary higher crests seemed to protrude. Once in a while the delicately constructed matter was ruptured and through the rift I could see innumerable dense, black monsters, large and small, rise and grow bigger above the earth. They swayed, tilted, swam upon the waves of the lakes, then drifted freely into space. Often we seemed to see before us riders on camels. My fellows insisted that I look through the binoculars but each time the riders turned out to be low bushes barely twenty-four inches high with which the mirage was playing. I longed for something animated, for the verdant green of spring, but in vain. The upland was absolutely desolate.

Eventually we reached a lowland that afforded our camels rich pasture, and there we rested.

We lay down in line with the four points of the compass with the camels in the center. We were lodging near the watering place in the valley of Arar; hence precaution was necessary. This valley of Arar is often mentioned in Arabic literature.

THE DESPISED SLEYB TRIBE

In a bend in the valley of Arar, on April 1, we spied two Sleyb tents. Dismounting from my camel, I scanned the

neighborhood with my prism binoculars to see whether there were any camels kneeling; for that would prove that Bedouins were there. Allah be praised! I perceived only three black common asses and eight white thoroughbreds; at the wells farther east I saw more asses, black as well as white, and several Sleyb women. As we descended into the valley two girls ran to meet us but as soon as we approached they hid in the channel. Mizel tried to coax them out but they remained within cover. The women were driving their asses away from the wells, fearing that we were Bedouins, their masters and extortioners. Upon the northern slope we saw several herds of goats and two asses carrying water bags and driven by a woman.

Reaching the wells, we found there only two young women, one man, one boy, and twelve asses which the man was just preparing to water. Mizel prevented him from doing so, however, as he would have used all the water and left none for us. The man was very angry. He took us for camel traders, cursed me and my companions, and invoked upon us an attack by robbers, a malediction that might easily be realized, since we were on the shortest route from Baghdad by way of Shethatha to Jowf and on to Damascus or Egypt.

The two women begged us for tobacco—and when Tuman gave them some they kissed his hands and neck.

We unloaded our animals and watered them, the boy descending one well after another with the canvas bucket which we would then haul up. These wells are deep and wide and fill up after every heavy rain. They are supplied only by the rain water which remains under the layer of sand and gravel that covers the rock below. An abundant rain had occurred in Arar and the vicinity four years

before. During the first and second years following it the wells were constantly half-full and the water could not be exhausted. The third year, however, it gathered but slowly, and the fourth year imperceptibly. After forty-eight hours the wells replenish only to the extent of a yield of five quarts each or ten at the most and even this small quantity will vanish unless a heavy rain occurs. We exhausted more than twenty wells, filling our bags only half-full at that, while our camels had barely laved their lips. To get even this small quantity of water we had examined over a hundred wells which the Sleyb had drained dry. On the edges of the channel and upon both its banks was a large growth of *lweyziyye*.[1] Its long, flexible, green sprouts, entirely without foliage, were covered with fruit of the size of almonds.

Of course Mizel had assured us ceremoniously only the day before that we should find plenty of water in the channel of Arar since, according to news that had reached him, the entire dry watercourse had been converted into a wild stream. Mere fiction! I should have liked to head straight toward the wide crest of Enaza, but as we lacked the necessary water and had not even watered the camels we were obliged to proceed in a northwesterly direction to the nearest watering place in the valley of Tbel. Should we find water there? A boy told us that it had rained in the valley of Tbel fourteen days before. This intelligence had been brought back by a scout sent out by the Sleyb, but was it the truth? God knew.

Mizel bought from the Sleyb women five and a half pounds of butter for one *mejidiyye* and a small castrated buck for two *mejidiyyat*. The women surrounded us, want-

[1] *Amygdalus arabicus*, Oliv.; an almond shrub.

ing us to kill the buck on the spot, cook it, and invite them to partake of the food. They begged that we should at least give them the head and all the intestines, but Mizel cut the buck's throat and fastened the carcass to his camel. Mizel made apologies for his fellow-tribesmen, asserting that they were hungry.

"The Bedouins name us Sleyb, but we call ourselves the Children of Salibi or the Children of Ghanem. There are many clans of us; we camp in the whole desert from the Persian Gulf as far as Aleppo and Damascus. We are poor wretches; nobody defends us and we must, therefore, pay to the Bedouins a stipulated sum for protection. In every large tribe we have one or more brethren, protectors whose duty it is to see that we are compensated for anything that has been taken away from us by the members of that tribe. All camels belonging to the Children of Salibi have the same mark branded on their temples. When our brother hears that there is with his tribe a camel with our brand, he takes possession of it and sends us word to come and get it. The asses are marked by every owner according to his wish; the sheep and goats bear no marks at all, since they always stay with their owners.

"A group of relatives usually camps together. Its herds stay in the same place; each group pays for protection one *mejidiyye* yearly to the brother. As there are about seventeen of such brethren, each group thus pays yearly for protection seventeen *mejidiyyat* ($15.30), besides being obliged to feed hungry raiders who frequently carry off their sheep and goats. What wonder that the Children of Salibi conceal themselves in the various ravines and flee at the sight of the Bedouins!"

"From where do you, the Children of Ghanem, hail?"

"That is known only to Allah. Our fathers told us that originally we camped in the territory of Hasa on the Persian Gulf, but who knows whether it is true?"

We ate the buck that evening. Mizel baked the intestines in ashes and ate them with relish without having bothered to clean them. Tuman and I wondered how much these two companions of ours devoured. At supper alone they emptied our kettle full of peeled wheat which on my other expeditions had sufficed for six or eight persons; and, in addition, each consumed at least a pound of bread with apricot jelly or sweet tea which they called *shay*. In the morning they ate over two pounds of bread each and the same amount three or four hours later. We often had to cook *eysh* at noon for them. On such occasions they poured the *shay* upon the peeled wheat and liked it. I thought they would be filled up after a few days but they kept on consuming the same amount of food and merely grew more particular. They began to throw away the burned bread crusts and asked Tuman to give them more sugar for their tea and more butter for their *eysh*. They urged him to mix the peeled wheat with *shaariyye*—a floury meal resembling noodles and very popular in Irak—or with other delicacies.

The smell of the meat attracted several eagles and hawks, and we could not drive them away.

When we started across the Rijl as-Safawiyyat next morning several flocks of birds as small as our goldfinch joined us; Mizel called them *swese*. They had yellow bellies, dark-green heads, and light-green backs, while the fringes of their wings were yellow with dark stripes. They were the first varicolored birds I had seen in northern Arabia.

Our poet Mizel akhu Zaëla was composing a poem in

my honor. Since a roving versifier must earn his living by his art, he apparently thought I would pay him well for a poem I liked. It was interesting to watch him. He pondered for several minutes and then recited two verses twenty or thirty times, substituting better words here and there. Then he bade Taresh pay attention and remember these verses. After Taresh had learned them, Mizel became absorbed and silent again, and after a while he sang the first two verses and added a third to these. Having sung them to Taresh innumerable times in his shrill voice, he then asked me to write them down while he composed the rest. When I found that he depicted me in his poem as sitting upon a *hejin* (mount camel) I demurred, saying that I rode a *dhelul*, that the Rwala do not say *hejin* but *dhelul*. The poet retorted:

"It is true, but I cannot employ such a common word as *dhelul* in my poem. In a poem one has to use the word that is graceful even though less familiar . . ."

THE BLOOD OF BROTHERS

Mizel related to me on our ride through the ravine of Rweyze some of the recent events in the family of Shalan.

He told how, at the death of Prince Sattam six years before, Mishal unjustly claimed the succession and took the insignia Abu-d-Dhur into his tent. Fahad and Nuri decided to replace him by force. When Mishal shot at Nuri, hitting his half-brother Mhammad in the forehead, Nuri in anger shot Mishal through the heart. He then brought the Abu-d-Dhur into the tent of his elder brother, Fahad, who became prince of all the Rwala.

But Fahad proved incapable of ruling and unpopular

by reason of his greed in regard to taxes. The Government was satisfied with his unpopularity, as it made him the more dependent upon it. But finally the chiefs retreated to the desert, and the Government was forced to give some of Fahad's power to Nuri before they would pay their taxes. The feud between the brothers grew until it took only an attack on Nuri's daughter by Trad, the pretended son of Fahad, to bring it to a climax. Nuri was warned by a slave that Fahad's son was about to assassinate him. A day of suspense followed; words, that the slave had said would directly precede the event, were spoken and Nuri hurried in to Fahad. After an argument Nawwaf struck Fahad in the chest and Nuri's slaves cut him down.

Nuri ordered that Abu-d-Dhur be immediately carried to his tent; he also appropriated Fahad's six herds of camels. Fares, Fahad's son, placed himself under the protection of the chief Eben Smeyr and demanded that Nuri return to him all the property of his father, but Nuri ceded to him only one hundred camels.

Shortly before I went into the depression of Sirhan Fares had attacked Nuri's camp twice in succession. It was because of this that during our sojourn at Biz and in the district to the southeast Nuri's tent was surrounded by three chains of guards, placed at distances of 100, 300, and 500 yards from it. Nuri himself supervised these guards to see that they did not fall asleep, and he never slept in his own tent but always in that of one of his slaves, or even in mine.

Fares yearned for peace, but presented conditions which Nuri could not accept. He demanded for himself an exclusive position among the chiefs, a three-fold share of all moneys, the restoration of all the camels, and Nuri's

daughter for Trad. When I once discussed these demands with Nuri, he said:

"To-day is not yesterday. Once I should have granted him or his father almost anything, but now I cannot do so."

How often, indeed, had Nuri sat pensive in my tent, seeing nothing, hearing nothing. Often he came three or even six times during the night to my tent and stood there for a long time as if petrified, gazing steadily at the ground. What thoughts were passing in his mind? What was depriving him of sleep? Was it his two brothers that he saw lying before him bathed in blood?

"Blood, especially the blood of a brother, cannot be wiped off," say the Bedouins.

COLD AND THIRST

On Saturday, April 3, we descended into the valley of Obeyyez. It seemed as if the entire region had been damned or bewitched: a dead, mortally wearisome desert. In the uplands icy winds blew on us. In the valleys scorching air suffocated us. Our weary camels stumbled. Behind rode Mizel singing poems in a high-pitched voice, composing ever new verses in my honor.

Finally we drew near the wide, deep valley of Tbel, well known for its numerous rain wells. It originates within the famous highland of Laha and terminates northeast of the settlement of Shethatha. The shallow wells at Jhayde were full of water. Allah be praised! We could not hold our camels back. They darted to the small, shallow wells in the channel, knelt, and drank in long draughts. I wished to fill the water bags but Mizel pro-

tested that there was water ahead and this would be an unnecessary burden to our camels. He also asserted that we were certain to find Sleyb there too, one of whom we might hire with a small camel and four water bags to accompany us up to Enaza. I asked him at least ten times whether he was absolutely sure we should find plenty of water at Chaachedi, and every time he answered in the affirmative and finally swore to it, reproaching me for my distrust. Therefore we filled our water bags only half-full and proceeded to the west.

Taresh pointed out to me an improvised bed of stones and dry perennials.

"Look, Musa, here lay my comrade Daban. He had been bitten by a mad dog in a camp near by. His relatives dragged him here, gave him salt, flour, and dried dates to last him forty days, and threatened him with death should he leave the place and come near them before the forty days had expired. About that time the rabies is supposed to declare itself and they were afraid he might bite or scratch somebody. They moved to the east and the injured man had to stay alone in the desert. His faithful comrade, Hmud, was on a raid at the time. Hearing on his return of the misfortune which had befallen his friend thirty-eight days before, he rode to him despite his kinsfolk's warning of possible contagion. For two days he sat by Daban, and listened to the unfortunate man depicting his torture:

"This is my lament, the lament of a strange dervish
Parted from the pilgrims and left on the camping ground.
O Hmud, O Hmud, take care of me who have been ensnared,
Among my kin is no honest man who cares.
By a mad dog am I bitten, though they say nothing ails me,

Near is the fortieth day appointed.
I could walk before the Arabs as if nothing ailed me,
Walk I could, though my entrails were filled with unrest.
What should it mean, O daring one! that my kin shun me
Like a dog driven away? They cannot be my kin!
The symptoms appear, O hero!
The end is near."

We reached the wells of Chaachedi on Sunday afternoon but found no trace of the Sleyb nor any fresh plants, a sure sign that there was no water in the wells. Mizel went down fifteen of them, from twelve to twenty feet deep, but could collect barely ten quarts of water. Had he deceived me intentionally? There was nothing left for us to do but to return to the valley of Tbel and replenish our supply. I said we would return to Tbel the same way as we had come, but Mizel undertook to lead us by a shorter route.

Leaving the wells, we turned south. Mizel, basing his estimate on the assumption that we had been riding an hour since leaving Tbel, concluded that we should reach the water in another half-hour. Dark clouds loomed above and now and then lightning flashed. Mizel paid no attention to the road; I myself had to seek the crossings in the channel, the sides of which were frequently very steep, while from the rear he issued advice and directions, especially when they were least needed. The half-hour of his calculation was long past but we saw no water.

We were exposed to a chill wind from the east. I shivered with cold. The road was poor, the channel washed out and full of turns separated by rocky spurs. Our camels were worn and starved: there was no pasture anywhere. I hoped to find some plants in the vicinity of the valley

of Tbel where it had rained; but always this valley continued to be half an hour distant.

Unable to keep in the saddle any longer I swerved into a bay in the valley wall and there we passed the night. After midnight the strong east wind carried away my blanket. Clad only in a long linen shirt and a caftan of the same material, I woke up shivering, found the blanket, and weighted it down with stones. The wind penetrated beneath it. No matter how I cowered or even hid my head under the covering to warm myself by my breath, I was shaken with chills and in torment.

In the morning we found the longed-for wells at Jhayde. We filled the water bags but needed a receptacle for still more water. The contents of our bags would last us for only three or four days at the most, whereas we needed water, not for six days as Mizel had said, but for ten. Could we carry water for this long journey? I had taken along a large waterproof blanket to protect the photographic plates and instruments and also to spread down in my tent when the ground was damp. On our scientific expeditions I covered the baggage with it to keep off humidity and frost. We gathered the ends of this together and tied them, thus making two large bags of it which we filled with water and loaded upon the water saddle. Although two of us hoisted on each side it required considerable effort before we could lift it up over the kneeling camel. Would the water leak out? Would not the blanket rub open against the saddle? Should it rip or should the ropes become loosened and the water run out, we were sure to be lost. We also filled the small bag in which we had carried water once before and which we now used to knead the dough in. By this means we obtained a supply for one more day.

As we found no pasture near the wells we rode on westward until it was time for breakfast. I ordered enough *eysh* to be cooked for one day and bread for two. I also forbade anybody to use a drop of the water without my permission. Whenever we stopped I examined the ground thoroughly for any thorns or sharp stones before we ventured to set down our improvised water bag and the other bags. I myself dipped out the water and apportioned it for the preparation of food as well as for drinking purposes. At night I slept by the bags; for, since my native companions knew that I waked at the least sound, they would not dare untie the bags to get a drink.

It was midnight when we settled to rest near Said. The camels all had heaps of the dry *khafur*[1] which they relished. Nor did I fail to examine the water bags again in the night.

THE GIANT STAIRWAY BETWEEN THE WUDIYAN AND THE HAMAD

We passed a spot where Prince Nuri had camped. Mizel recollected how he had baked truffles here and he even showed me the remains of the coals from the fire.

"I never remember such an amount of truffles in this neighborhood as there was that year. In one afternoon I gathered my mantle full of them and in the evening presented them to Nuri, who gave one to each person present. Together they roasted them over the fire; even the Prince had fetched some butter, crumbled the baked truffles into it, and eaten them with relish. Besides truffles, mushrooms grow in the sand. These are not edible but

[1] *Schismus arabicus*, Nees; *Schismus calycinus*, L.; an oatlike grass with dense stalks.

are used as a remedy for colds. Persons suffering with rheumatism dry them and smoke them in a pipe. Not only we, the sons of Adam, but animals also know truffles. Gazelles dig them from beneath the sand and enjoy eating them. Here to the left, Musa, my little camel, was kneeling, which I rode to the territory of the Muntefizh. The camel was a gift of Nuri—may Allah grant him His protection! After fifteen nights I arrived in the blockhouse of Abu Ghar which was then inhabited by Sadun al-Ashkar. I needed his help. The few Sleyb dwelling in his territory had killed my relative, Zaël, and I went to get the blood price. Oh, when will the Rwala return to this camping ground?"

Taresh intoned:

"My eyes have had enough of sleep, morning has appeared:
My eyes have had enough of sleep and have awakened me.
I went into our comrades' camp and where the herds had slumbered;
There the coffee pots had stood. These stirred my memory!

O camping place! Mourn not, mourn not for what is gone and vanished.
After a year, O camping place! hope and bide. . . .
O camping place! She left me like the full moon losing luster,
And when she left, O camping place! my counsel she denied."

The rocky declivities we passed were gradually becoming lower. The next day before dawn we were again in the saddles, going in a southwesterly direction, and saw to the left of us several hills called Dhembuh.

"Here hunters look for ostriches at the end of spring," remarked Mizel.

Fig. 20

The valley of Helali, near the Ab-al-Kur valley

Fig. 21

The upland of Biyaz

"Do the ostriches come as far north as this?"

"Still farther."

"You are right, brother of Zaëla. While I was camping with Nuri south of Adhra his herdsman shot two ostriches there."

"They stay until the first rain comes. Then our poor wretches, the Sleyb, lie in wait for them. They conceal themselves behind high piles of stone like those you see on top of the Dhembuh hills and upon sighting the ostriches they try to approach them against the wind."

The dome on top of the mesa of Laha glistened in the rays of the rising sun as if it were covered with gold plates.

"We call it Meshraf. Our lord and prophet, Mohammed, came as far as this and prayed at Meshraf," explained Mizel.

A thin cloud obscured the dome. When it departed and the dome loomed against the overcast sky, Mizel greeted it:

"Allah grant thee life, Meshraf!"

The Mesa of Laha is the largest of a series of rolling plateaus that rise like colossal stairs above the lowlands. The Rwala say that during the Deluge it rode the waters like an island. Untouched by the heavenly water with which Allah flooded the world and by which stones were imbued with the power to emit sparks when struck, it alone has no fire-breeding stones.

Mizel was constantly ridiculing Taresh, whom he called by no other name than "the darling of beauties," ironically inquiring why he had not yet married. He boasted that he himself had been married sixteen times although he was only thirty years of age. Eleven times he had married maidens and five times divorced women. He enu-

merated these women to us by their names and in chronological order. Some of them stayed with him only about a week and then left him without a divorce.

"It is no disgrace," he assured me, "if a woman leaves her spouse and marries another."

One woman, who had borne him two girls and a boy, he was about to divorce in order that he might marry a younger woman, despite the fact that he loved the boy dearly. He complained that during these last adverse years he had lost all his goats and so his family was without a source of livelihood and even without milk. When I asked him how this could be in view of all the presents he had boasted of receiving, he replied:

"All these gifts, O thou long lived one, I sold to pay off my debts, or else they were stolen. May Allah curse the robber, for he who takes anything from a Slubi commits the gravest injustice."

In the morning we proceeded in a monotonous region and crossed the head of the valley of Ghadaf which trends toward the northeast. An enchanting panorama of islands, blue lakes and mountains greeted us, but, alas, it was merely an optical illusion that teased our nerves and incited within us a longing for the verdant plains of our native land.

This part of the Hamad constitutes an immense, almost absolutely level plateau, strewn with flints and other calcareous concretions left from the erosion of overlying strata. These concretions rest upon a thin but very hard calcareous crust which is impervious to water. In places there are shallow, irregularly shaped pans or depressions, also filled with calcareous concretions which the run-off has covered with fine deposits of silt. Through chemical action these deposits have been cemented and now pre-

sent smooth, somewhat slippery surfaces about one and a half feet below the general level of the surrounding plateau. Water, which accumulates in the depressions, is blown across them by the prevailing westerly winds, and in dry times the wind piles up accumulations of fine dust along the eastern edges. Hence it is on the eastern sides that the finest deposits of silt accumulate and the soil retains moisture the longest. Here annual and perennial plants take root, forming meadows. The tangled matting of roots catches the water seeping through the soil and for a while stimulates the growth of the meadows, but as each meadow widens less and less water reaches its eastern margin. As a result the plants there dry up, wither, and revert to dust; and the soil, deprived of the support of the roots, is blown away by the wind or washed away by the run-off. Thus a meadow for a time grows on the western side and disappears on the eastern. Most of the meadows are longer from north to south than from east to west, some of them being a thousand feet long by six hundred feet wide.

In the evening my camel was unable to go on. She breathed with difficulty and kept stopping to rest. For fear she might collapse altogether we had to encamp.

A LONELY EASTER

Cold again! The water bags were frozen, our underwear and coverings were too thin, my camel could scarcely totter. Taresh seared her with a piece of heated iron above the tail and between the front legs. He said that she was suffering from constipation and that searing was the best remedy. After it grew a little warmer we gave the camel

ten quarts of water. A few minutes later she began to graze.

On Friday, April 9, Tuman and I ascended the crest of Enaza, seated ourselves behind a heap of stones that was piled up upon the highest point, and sketched a map of the entire vicinity.

Enaza extends from the south northward, rising some sixty to a hundred feet higher than the surrounding country. To the north rises the wide, hilly belt of Nezayem, to the east loom the two domes of Nheydeyn, while farther to the north a boundless, undulating plain stretches from west to east. On the southeast the horizon was obscured by the table-shaped belt of Laha, while to the southwest, peering like a hideous monster between low clouds, glowered the black volcano Umm Wual which marks the northeastern boundary of the volcanic region. Below us extended the valley of Hawran from the shallow channels upon the eastern slope of Enaza northeastward towards the Euphrates.

After the survey we resumed our march southward—homeward toward the camp of Nuri. Our hurriedly improvised emergency water bag stood the test. The water stayed clear, was free from odor, and did not evaporate as rapidly as that in the two leather bags. The cover resisted all friction and even seemed to grow tougher and more rigid.

Mizel, delighted that we were returning to the camp of Nuri, began to sing ditties of his own composing. Taresh, with wages and perhaps even a reward at hand, began to sing likewise. Mizel was not pleased. He wanted us to listen to him alone. He was a real poet while Taresh could do nothing but repeat the songs or verses of others. Therefore he began to ridicule him:

"There is no singer like you, O Taresh, nor is there as handsome a man among all the Dahamshe as yourself. Any beautiful woman would rejoice in you. Your voice reminds me of the squeaking of the water wheels by the Euphrates and in your dainty face any toothless old dame may see herself."

A snow flurry with rain overtook us. Praise be to Allah that it lasted only a short while. During the night the thermometer dropped below freezing and the humidity was high.

In the morning we set up the theodolite as best we could with our stiff hands and determined the latitude. We had to warm the small water bag by the fire so as not to break it. On none of my previous expeditions had I suffered so much from cold as I did on this one; and yet the Prince, before our departure, had encouraged me by saying: "Be not afraid of the cold." Our camels were shivering as much as we and were losing flesh perceptibly. Water and warmer regions were still far to the south, many days distant, and only Allah knew whether our animals would hold out so long.

Taresh was singing:

"Why do you strike our camels when they come to drink?
Coax them to the water: '*dæwh*, my white ones,' cry!
Better it were to strike a man full-armed, when mounted,
Than kick the camel's shoulders where the bridle rests.
Alas! Woe unto me! those kisses I regret
When I loosened my hair and my darling drank from my teeth."

"Who composed the poem you are singing, Taresh?" I asked.

"The poet was a girl. She loved a youth with all her

heart. She knew that her nearest relative had laid claim to her and that he would not consent to her marrying her lover; therefore she was willing to flee with him to another tribe. The death with which she was threatened by her revengeful kinsman had no terrors for her; for her lover she was ready for any sacrifice. Shortly before the day of the flight the Arabs were suffering from thirst. There was no water for either men or animals. The youth confided to his sweetheart that he had found under the dry channel bank a small hole filled with rain water where he would fill the water bags belonging to his tent and water his camels. The girl kept watch and, when she saw him ride away with the camels, she tied two empty water bags to her water saddle, mounted a she-camel, and drove her herd after his, not coming up with him until they reached the hole. He was just filling his water bags, holding off the camels with a long spear. Catching sight of his sweetheart's camels, he dragged the full bags from the water, jumped down into the hole, poured the water into a small hole over which a hide was stretched, and with his long spear stabbed the girl's camels as they crowded to drink. It was in vain that she begged him to fill at least one of her bags. He cared only for himself and his herd. Then the girl sang that ditty."

The Prince had asked me to look out for wells in the Hamad; we passed nine artificial reservoirs which, if cleaned out, would serve him for wells. But Nuri was a Bedouin and as such had no comprehension of the benefit of work of this sort.

Before sunset we had our supper, then rode on late into the night. How bitter cold it was! In the homeland the bells were ringing, everywhere was jubilation over the resurrection of the Savior, and here were we, alone,

forsaken! Forsaken? Allah was with us; under His protection we were traveling. Hallelujah!

✧ ✧

OUR POET PROVES MALICIOUS

We turned toward the southeast near the Khabra al-Bark, or, as Mizel expressed it, turned toward the Southern Nose from the left side. Both the Bedouins and the Sleyb think that at each of the earth's four corners there is, far beyond the horizon, a high mountain, half of which rests upon the land while the other half is immersed in the sea. These mountains slope precipitously toward the sea, while toward the land they project in sharp spurs, each called a nose. Upon these four principal world mountains rests the sky. During the rainy season the spirits—nay, even Allah—like to dwell near the southern mountain—which is called a *sherk*—because it is located in the inner desert; in summer they move to the northern mountain.

Suddenly to the southwest we saw for the first time the whole of the mighty giant Amud with all its pinnacles upraised. The gravel became coarser and was mixed with lava and basalt, proof that the volcanic region reached deep into the Hamad. Black lava colossi, swimming in a sea of heat waves, upreared themselves like the battlements of a fort, while one stretch of lava lay like a black talon, forever embedded in the yellow clay.

Mizel kept deviating but I insisted on keeping to the route set.

"What do we care for the direction? Whoever would get anywhere must watch the landmarks, for every region has its more frequented routes." Mizel was loath

to follow me and tried to coax Taresh not to expose himself to certain peril.

Above us circled several eagles and a hawk. Were they waiting for us? Would they feast upon our flesh? Taresh intoned:

"O you who fear death! know
That death is not preceded by a herald.
Fear cannot rescue the *habari* birds from the falcon's talons,
Nor prolong life, short as it is."

My native companions had been annoying me, evidently intentionally, ever since we left Enaza. Tuman and I had to watch them day and night to see that they did not run away with the supplies and the camels. Once I had to threaten them with the revolver. That helped.

The real instigator of the disobedience was the Slubi Mizel who was angry with me because I did not let him have his own way unreservedly and because I had proved that he did not know the Hamad. As I had explored the western and northern part of the Hamad and had drawn a map of the eastern fringe of the region according to the testimony of various reliable men, I was in a position to judge whether he was right or wrong and could prove his error immediately.

It began to pour hard. After the rain we paused awhile for supper. When Mizel took for himself and Taresh the peeled wheat upon which Tuman had put a lot of butter, I noticed, as I had noticed for the ten preceding days, that he left the butter on one side and later put it all upon his own plate with his portion of peeled wheat. After he had prepared both plates and was about to begin eating, I told him he must wait until Taresh had made the camels kneel, and when the latter came up I handed

him the plate upon which Mizel had put his own supper. Mizel understood my motive and refused even to touch his peeled wheat. Taresh, on the contrary, praised it, saying:

"By Allah Himself, comrades, during my whole life I have not eaten such an *eysh* as that of to-day."

When he learned the reason for the good taste of that particular supper he was very angry with Mizel, attacked him, and yelled that he would rip his abdomen open because he had deprived him for so many days of his fat. Thus I estranged the conspirators and secured Taresh for myself.

Taresh now helped us willingly with the loading, not only in the evening but next morning as well, without paying any attention to Mizel. Going southeast, on April 13, we crossed the fresh tracks of eleven asses. Mizel praised the asses raised by his kinsmen, who breed both thoroughbred and common beasts. The former are tall animals of white color, more rapid and of more endurance on the road than the best mare. The common asses are dark. In summer an ass can go two days without water. The Sleyb sell them at Baghdad and Damascus, but the asses do not last long in the city for they miss their accustomed fodder and the pure air of the desert. I have heard that as late as a hundred years ago there were wild asses roaming near the depression of Sirhan, where they had an abundance of water and, in the volcanic district, good pasture and still better hiding places. It is said that the last wild ass was shot at the wells of Ghamr, southeast of the lake of Azrak. Old Hmar told stories of his grandfather's hunts for wild asses near the depression of Sirhan; but since firearms have come to be used by the Bedouins wild asses have become less and less numerous.

They are still to be found in Jezire, between the middle Euphrates and Tigris, whence the Sleyb often bring asses for breeding purposes.

We came across a considerable quantity of *mharut* [1] near the Khabra Gharaka and stopped to let our camels graze. The leaves of this plant are a greenish vermilion in color and look as if they were covered with a white veil; the blossoms grow in yellow clusters, the root is long, black, and as thick as one's hand. The new plant emits a peculiar odor which also emanates from camels after they have grazed long upon it. The Bedouins drive milch camels away from it as it would also give their milk the unpleasant smell.

The night was bright and warm. I should have liked to ride on but the animals were worn out; therefore we stopped at the head of the valley of Shweyhet.

In the morning the landscape was ever the same: level swells, wide valleys that were shallow at first and deepened gradually toward the southeast, coarse gravel and long, narrow, grassy strips. We followed the right side of the wide valley of Shweyhet, with the precipitous slope of Zellum rising over three hundred feet high on the left. The clay in this depression is not yellow or reddish as farther north, but white, and it is intermingled with large white stones; therefore the territory is called Biyaz, White Lands (Fig. 21).

At noon we discerned far ahead and below us the numberless mesas of Zhiyal. The plain of the Hamad ceases abruptly, falling almost perpendicularly more than a hundred and fifty feet into a basin in which are numerous large and small hills of all conceivable shapes. The eye

[1] *Scorodosma arabica*, Vel.; scented herb with long root, tall stem, decompound, hairy leaves, and many yellow flowers.

may perceive low and high pyramids, domes, cones, tarbooshes, etc. I was most attracted by a mighty cupola resembling a huge rotunda. None of these hills are higher than the neighboring plateau. To the southeast there is said to be an old cemetery which may be a Nabatæan burial ground. The sepulchers are reported to be in groups connected by subterranean passages, through which one may walk some distance underground among the rocks. I was told that there were still a few remains of old structures in this ancient burial ground, but I found it impossible to visit it. On my way to Skaka I was unaware of its existence and from Skaka it was altogether inaccessible.

The colors would have gladdened the heart of a painter: the two layers of sandstone composing the hills, one bluish, the other crimson; rosy or white sand around them; gray-green shrubs of *korzi*[1] and the bright green of *solleyan*[2]; and over all the singular hue made by a scorching sun. It was very striking, but how could we pause?

Night was upon us, and a storm, and we had drunk our last drop of water that morning.

IN CAPTIVITY

Distressed with thirst we left our camp on Thursday, April 15, before sunrise. Mizel was impudent and unruly. As soon as the sun appeared I paid him his wages. He mounted the camel again and thus we rode on.

Suddenly the palms of the oasis of Skaka came into

[1] *Deverra clorantha,* Coss.; high shrub with divided leaves and small greenish flowers.

[2] *Aristida coerulescens,* Desf.; *Aristida ciliata,* Desf.; low, grass-like perennial.

view to our inexpressible joy. We had not strayed, and here before us were water, food, rest and security. Our jubilation was not to last long, however. A shot snapped forth, then another, and several men ran out with rifles from the settlement. What was it? Were not the inhabitants of Skaka friends of the Rwala? The Prince had told me to visit Skaka upon our return and inquire there about the location of his camp. Ahead of the men five youths were running. When they came within a hundred feet of us they put their rifles to their shoulders, took aim, then walked leisurely toward us. Mizel greeted them but received no reply. Their leader, a man about twenty-five years old with a sympathetic face, which, however, bore a trace of cruelty, asked roughly:

"Who are you?"

Taresh and Mizel informed him shortly. Scornfully looking at Mizel, the leader decided:

"You are a Slubi. The Sleyb are our enemies, and I know not the Bedouin [meaning Taresh] and do not believe that you speak the truth. If you would save your necks, surrender and follow me; if not, we will shoot you."

Meanwhile the others had surrounded us and now they led us into the settlement. In front of the house of the chief Raja—for this was the name of the youthful leader—we were compelled to stop and force our camels to kneel. I wanted to drive directly to water but they pulled me off the saddle. The chief ordered his men to bring all our baggage into his house immediately. When I protested and begged that he would listen first while I explained, he smiled kindly, hit me in the chest, and seized my carbine; whereupon two of his men seized me from behind, and an old woman—later I learned that

she was his mother—jeered at me and spat in my face. I had to look on while they carried away my baggage, unsaddled the camels, and drove them through a narrow gate into a long passage. Then they dragged me into the square yard, and then into a large room which soon filled with men. They pressed upon me and showered me with questions, but I made no answer. Just then Mizel leaped into the room.

"Who are you?" someone asked him.

"Who are we?" Mizel cried. "Listen, men of Skaka, hear my answer"; and he began to recite a poem which described how he had come to Prince Nuri and asked his permission to accompany me, and told by what routes we had come to Skaka.

"All that is a lie. He is a poet and a poet always lies," said the men in reply to his efforts.

Sometime after, Raja, the chief, came in and invited Tuman and me to follow him. He led us to a room on the first floor of the house, which was built of adobe, and began to question us. Indignant at such treatment, I warned him to beware the wrath of Prince Nuri and of Nawwaf, his son, the master of Skaka. He replied that his men might have shot me and that I should thank Allah for being safe by having fallen into his hands; for had I been seen by the Kreshe—the inhabitants of the northern part of Skaka, who were at war with the Rwala—they surely would have killed me. I laughed at his words scornfully and maintained that I had no fear of the Kreshe clan or of his own men, as powerful avengers stood behind me. My haughtiness surprised him and he inquired calmly whether I was really the Sheikh Musa who marched with Nuri.

"Why do you ask, O Raja? You know well who I am.

There were standing in front of your house eight or ten men, of whom some had seen me in Jowlan, others in Ghuta, in the depression of Sirhan, in Jowf, and also in Kara. I am sure they recognized me and told you that I had lived for eight months with Prince Nuri, and I know that you have ordered them to keep silence."

"I?"

"Yes, you, O Raja."

"Well, I do not believe them."

"Neither do you believe me because you will not believe."

"Yes, I must convince myself. I shall send a letter to Nuri that he may verify by his seal that you are the Sheikh Musa."

"I can show you a letter now with the seal of Prince Nuri affixed."

"No, no, he must write me."

He summoned his scribe and dictated to him a letter for Prince Nuri, which Mizel was to deliver. Raja said that Nuri was watering his camels in the settlement of Kara and that Mizel could reach him that very day. Mizel was reluctant, but Raja took away the wages I had paid him and declared that he should not have his money until he returned with Nuri's reply.

Meantime, down below, the men who had captured us were arguing about the division of the spoils. Each one wished to take his share home with him at once. Raja listened. After a while he said, his eyes glittering like those of a leopard:

"Listen, shall I give you over to them? What will you give me? Give me your revolver."

"I will give it to you if you will permit me to load my

camels at once and march onward. Only good will come of it."

"The revolver belongs to me then. What else will you give me? Garments, money, I want; money, gold, I want."

"Take it all. Here are my garments," and I began to divest myself of them. "And my gold you may find for yourself."

He searched my garments. Then I had to accompany him into a dark room where our baggage was deposited. He scrutinized piece after piece but found nothing to his fancy.

"How much gold will you send me from Nuri?"

"I shall consult the Prince about that. If you will treat me honorably my bounty will surely repay you for your magnanimity. May I then proceed with the saddling of my camels and the loading at once?"

"Aye, by Allah, you may." Whereupon I called to Taresh and Tuman to saddle and load.

Hearing this, the four men, who in company with Raja had captured us, instantly darted from their room into the yard, yelled in alarm, and with their relatives filled the yard, the passageway, and the anteroom of Raja's house. I said to Raja:

"You, O chief, have pledged me your word. You have the first voice in the settlement of Skaka. Prove that you have also the power to fulfill your word."

Thereupon Raja seized his Martini rifle and ran out. A wild howl issued from his mouth, a multitude of like howls answered him, daggers and sabers flashed, rifles were put to shoulders.

Raja came back to me. "Wait, Musa; this would result in bloodshed."

"And the blood would stain you, O Raja."

A relative of Raja by the name of Marran grabbed me and whispered in my ear:

"They want to afflict you. Flee!" He pulled me away, with Tuman running after us. We leaped from a side yard into a garden, ran through it, and crossed two or three more before we reached the house of Marran. He opened the gate, immediately closed it behind us, and stationed beside it his adult son armed with a Martini rifle, giving him orders to admit no one. We stayed with him several hours. Finally Raja came, accompanied by his brother and two negroes, and announced that we might return. He explained that Mizel had betrayed us to the Kreshe, who had thereupon occupied the road leading to the settlement of Twer. He informed us further that, according to the latest news, Nuri had left that morning for the wells of Sfan and therefore Raja had sent the letter by a swift messenger to Nawwaf in Jowf.

In Raja's house we were again surrounded by a crowd of wildly howling, gesticulating men. A tall chap grabbed me and dragged me into a corner, vociferously demanding my gold; Mizel told him I had a bagful.

"Have you given it all to Raja? Aye, he has had his, but we are still hungry." Barely had I freed myself from his grasp when I was held by three or four others. Then two slaves of Raja took me between them and led me out into the garden, whence we escaped into the house of an Akeyli who was a protégé of Prince Nuri. There we remained until sunset. As we were returning, a young man shouted after me:

"Damned strangers! Let us slay them and we will tear the bowels out of their bellies!"

Fig. 22

At Kara

Fig. 23

The oasis of Kara

Turning his way, I asked: "Why do you speak thus, son? Have I harmed you?"

"Allah damn you!" was his retort.

The following day Mizel told me that he had sent a report to Nawwaf in my name and had promised the messenger three *mejidiyyat* ($2.70).

"Why did you not ask me first?" I inquired. "Whatever you have done without my consent is no concern of mine."

Meantime my camels were starving. The first day I had bought for them about twenty-six pounds of straw for one and a half *mejidiyyat*, and on Friday and Saturday I procured some dry *shih* and *ruthe* for two *mejidiyyat*.

On Friday Raja came with new demands. According to him, Mizel had told all over the settlement that I had given him, Raja, ten pounds, and now his four companions also wanted ten pounds apiece.

HOME ONCE MORE

In the afternoon the lucky star began to twinkle for me. I learned that Hmar, Nuri's chief negro, had arrived in Skaka, and I found him in the house of the Akeyli. Hearing of the treatment I had received, he was very angry and immediately took me under his protection: that is, he offered me his services. The Skaka settlers, well aware of his influence with Nuri, awarded him first place and waited on him as if he were a big chief. They were not a little surprised, therefore, when they saw the mighty slave Hmar leave his rug, forsake his room, and come halfway to greet me and then himself prepare me a seat, pour coffee for me, and serve me. From that moment I

was master. I should have been glad to leave Skaka that very day, but I had to wait for Hmar, who wished to marry the white daughter of a blacksmith and take her back to the camp.

On Friday and Saturday many people with sore eyes came to me and begged me for medicines. Among them was the youth who would have torn the bowels out of the strangers' abdomens. Said I to him:

"See, my son! Yesterday you would have ripped me and to-day you come and ask of me, the 'damned stranger', medicine for your ailing mother. What am I to do about you?"

But I gave him the medicine, visited his mother, and told him how to take care of her.

As already noted, the northern portion of the Skaka settlement is inhabited by the Kreshe clan, the southern by the Maazhle. The settlement has about three thousand inhabitants. They grow palms, vegetables, and a little barley. As the palms must be watered frequently, much labor is necessary, since the wells are from eighty to a hundred feet deep. More than a third of the settlers migrate yearly with the Rwala to Syria. There they work for farmers and with the money thus earned they purchase clothing, wheat and barley, and at the end of the summer they come back with the Rwala to their settlement. Thus to maintain good relations with the Rwala is the primary condition of their existence. When the dissolution of Eben Rashid's domain began, civil war flared up also in the settlement of Skaka. The Kreshe, wishing to appropriate some of the gardens of the Maazhle, attacked them but were repulsed with the loss of ninety-seven men in one night. Ever since October, 1908, the fighting had been raging in Skaka, the number of fallen

on both sides mounting to over two hundred men. We could hear the shots day and night.

On Friday a young man stole into the Kreshe district and lay in ambush for a man who had killed his father. When his victim finally emerged from his house, the youth aimed at him and shattered his skull. On Saturday he came to ask me to examine his rifle as the lock had not seemed to function well since the day before.

When Nawwaf entered Jowf, the Maazhle proclaimed themselves for him, the Kreshe against him. Whereupon the Rwala launched repeated raids against the latter, captured their herds and killed more than forty men. It was his knowledge of these facts that had prompted Raja to say I ought to thank Allah that I had not fallen into the hands of the Kreshe. That I should have fared badly at their hands is beyond the shadow of a doubt, for they feared no one. They were secure in their solidly built houses, were well armed, and in their high-walled gardens were in a position to resist for years the attack of the Bedouins. Nawwaf, who had now been occupying Jowf for over two months, had the support of many Rwala but was still unable to bring the inhabitants of Mared and Khadhne to subjugation. Since the Maazhle, friends of the Rwala, treated us thus, what would their enemies have done to us?

Nor did Raja and the elders of the Maazhle clan rely greatly upon the protection of Nuri.

"He will soon leave with his Rwala for the territory of the settlers and will leave us here to our fate. We must then help ourselves," said Raja.

On Saturday afternoon the messenger returned from Nawwaf with one letter for Raja and another for me. Nawwaf wrote that he had reproved Raja for capturing

and robbing us and had demanded that he restore all that had been taken away from me and escort me wherever I wanted to go. He reassured me of his friendship and begged me to forgive Raja his affront, as he had not acted thus out of malice but merely through ignorance.

On Sunday morning we left the settlement of Skaka. We were accompanied by thirty-four warriors who were to defend us in case of an attack by the Kreshe. My camel was so tired I had to walk. Every one of us had a loaded rifle. Raja and Hmar advised me to watch the sand drifts carefully to the south for any Kreshe who might be hidden in them, but I could detect none. We reached the settlement of Twer, consisting of about fifty dwellings with three hundred inhabitants, all of them blacksmiths. Our armed escorts were to wait there until we reached Kara; but there were still eighteen men and six women, most of them relatives of the young wife of the negro Hmar, who went with us. The bride sat upon my camel. Mizel, whom I had discharged, walked.

We filled our water bags in the settlement of Kara and then started on in a southwesterly direction toward the sand drifts, where we met camel riders who had been sent by Eben Mashhur for water and who told us that Nuri was camping near by in Adhriyyet umm Arta. The ascent to the southern upland proved exhausting for my weary camel, which paused every fifty paces and panted. At last, Sunday afternoon, April 18, we reached the tent of the Prince.

We were being actively discussed in the camp, for at noon a man from Twer had brought news of what had happened to us in the settlement of Skaka and the Prince was planning to come to our help with riders if we did not arrive home before evening. When I entered his tent

he rose, the chiefs and all others present following his example; then he rushed to meet me, grasped my right hand and pressed it warmly, while my other hand was shaken by the chiefs and other Rwala. The Prince then turned to the men who had come from Skaka:

"Know you not, you men of Skaka, that Musa belongs among the foremost of chiefs? If you have deprived him of so much as one hair, I shall have you all chained in irons. Speak, Sheikh Musa! Have you missed anything? Slaves, take the rifles from the men of Skaka and do not give them back to them until they have restored to Musa all they have taken from him."

I narrated in detail what had occurred at Skaka and briefly described my expedition, the Prince frequently interrupting me with manifestations of indignation at the behavior of the Slubi Mizel. The latter listened to my report; he could not deny its truthfulness, as Taresh and the men from Skaka verified all I had told.

Presently a slave of Zamel eben Subhan, the minister of Eben Rashid, came, accompanied by three men, all of them dressed in silken clothes. The Prince received them in a very friendly manner and during their stay of eight days had two wethers slaughtered for them. He renewed peace with Eben Rashid, but only so far as he himself was concerned and under several conditions. Then Eben Subhan's slave went to Jowf to negotiate with Nawwaf, who would not agree to the peace ratified by his father but the following night attacked the adherents of Eben Rashid, demolished two of their houses, and ordered the palms in two gardens to be cut down. The Prince said to me:

"Nawwaf and the chiefs are free. Let them do as they please."

That evening I was visited by Marran with whom I had taken refuge in Skaka, who came to ask for gifts for himself. I directed Naser to give him my half-worn silk caftan and my shirt. A little while after, Marran returned to thank me for the gift, but seemed very dejected about it. When I tried to cheer him by telling him how well my silk *zebun* would fit him, he smiled sourly and replied:

"Every gift comes from Allah, but Allah was very parsimonious in this instance."

I was surprised at his words and asked him to let me see the *zebun* I had given him. Then I found out that Naser had deceived him, that instead of giving him my silk *zebun* and my shirt he had palmed off on him whatever of his own clothes he himself could not use. He fulfilled my first order only upon my vigorous admonition.

Taresh received his promised wages of fifteen *mejidiyyat* ($13.50) and five *mejidiyyat* ($4.50) more as a gift, as the Prince had promised. He was so well satisfied that he declared he would remain in my service; but the Prince answered in my name:

"You have received your money; leave my camp immediately and go to your protectors."

"They camp far, by Shizhizh."

"Let me not behold you in the camp to-morrow morning!"

VIII. IN THE CAMP AND IN THE OASIS

CAMEL TRADERS

On the morning of Monday, April 19, I observed several camel riders dismounting in front of the Prince's tent. They were Akeyl, camel traders, who had come to join the Rwala in order to go along with them to Damascus. The herds of camels they had bought in the desert were with a clan that had already moved in a northwesterly direction; they themselves had come to the Prince to pay him their respects and to secure his protection.

As the Rwala are occupied almost exclusively in camel breeding, it is only in exchange for camels that they can get grain, clothing, arms, saddles, and other necessities of life. They sell the camels either in the inner desert or in the settled territory, and nearly always to the same wholesale merchants who live in the larger towns on the borders of Arabia and in Egypt and India. The most prominent among these is the Eben Bassam family, from the settlement of Bassam in Kasim. Its members own large business houses at Basra, Bombay, Tayef, Cairo, and Damascus. They export camels from Arabia, they act as agents for the importing of coffee, spices, and rice, not only by ship or railroad but also by pack camels, and they supply the Bedouins with arms. There is no large settlement in inner Arabia where an agent of Eben Bassam does not reside.

The Âl Salem family also is now engaged almost exclusively in the buying and selling of camels. These merchants hail from Deriyye but live at Baghdad and Damascus. Members of this family once helped the Wahhabite princes of the Eben Saud family and even now they have many friends in Nejd.

The third firm engaged in trading in camels—also in clothing—is the Âl Isa family. They reside at Damascus and trade chiefly with the Aneze and Hwetat tribes.

The wholesale dealers hardly ever visit inner Arabia. They have their middlemen to whom they furnish money for dealings on their behalf. All these middlemen or agents are natives of Kasim and are called Akeyl, whether they belong to the tribe of that name or not. An Akeyli agent gets money from the wholesale dealer to buy camels from a certain tribe. He drives the animals which he has bought to Egypt or to Basra or Kweyt where he sells them, dividing the net profit with the wholesale dealer in such a way that the latter gets two-thirds or a half of it. If the agreement was that the wholesale dealer was to get two-thirds, he must stand the entire loss that may result from the transaction; in the other case the loss is shared equally. It should be said in explanation of this that the demand for camels is not always the same. Often prices in Egypt and Basra rise suddenly, and the Bedouins learn of this and ask more too; then the middleman or speculator, as he might be called, has to buy dear; yet when he brings the camels to the market the price may have fallen and he must sell at a loss.

Such an Akeyli agent hires assistants, usually his countrymen from Kasim, provides himself with light, white tents, coffee, rice, and often arms as well, both for sale and exchange, and rides with letters of recommendation

to the princes or chiefs of the tribes from which he means to buy. Having delivered the letters and gifts sent to those dignitaries by the wholesale dealer, he puts up his tents either in the prince's camp or, if he permits it, in the camp of some chief. The chief of the camp where the trader has put up his tents is also his host, in the sense of giving him protection as his guest though he does not board him. The Bedouins now bring their camels to his white tents and as a rule sell them for cash. Only when the agent has brought arms and ammunition from Kweyt or Azher for sale will they exchange their animals for these articles. On the sale of every camel the prince or the chief gets one-half or one *mejidiyye* ($0.45 or $0.90). The purchased animal is then branded with the Akeyli mark and left to graze in the herd with the others.

For his herdsmen the Akeyli hires youths from the tribe where he is buying at the time. Many herdsmen accompany the agent's herds as far as Egypt and on their return tell of the wonderful things they have seen or learned on their trip. If the Akeyli buys camels in the inner desert he stays on with his purchased herds for many weeks, or even months, with the same tribe until it moves to the settled territory, generally toward the end of June. If he buys from tribes who never leave the inner desert he drives the herds he has bought from tribe to tribe until he comes to some clan of a tribe which will leave for the tilled territory as a rule in May or June, there to supply itself for its sojourn in the desert. On reaching the border of the desert the Akeyli proceeds to the nearest large town where camel markets are held. If he can sell his animals there advantageously, he will do so and return to the tribe from which he came and buy camels again; but should he think he could do better in Egypt, he will buy everything

he can from other speculators whom he happens to find in the town and then journey on to Egypt.

The herds belonging to the Akeyli may be captured by strange raiders, even as the herds of members of the tribe itself with whom he happens to be migrating, and for that reason the Akeyl have in every large clan their brother to whom they pay from four to five Turkish pounds ($18.00-$22.50), one good riding camel, and two or three good cloaks annually. This brother is obliged to restore to them every camel stolen by a member of his clan.

THE RWALA IN LOVE AND MARRIAGE

Toward evening the Prince came, eager to tell me what had taken place in my absence. He said that Mamduh eben Sattam was married, and I asked him when his son Saud would marry or whether he would rather remain single.

"Single, Musa? He will not and must not remain single. It is the duty of every Rweyli capable of procreation to marry. This duty is laid upon him by his connection with his kinsmen. The more numerous these are, the more power and influence they possess. The individual who refused to defend the rights of his kin would be expelled, and whoever deliberately declined to multiply its defenders would meet the same fate. Without his kin the Bedouin would be the most wretched of beings.

"I do not and cannot understand how a youth could remain single. The palm wants to be fructified; one bird joins another, the animals pair one with another, and the sons of Adam do the same. I was hardly twelve years old when I had a liking for a girl of the same age. It was generally known, but neither my father nor my uncle

objected at all. It is said: 'Love comes from Allah.' Allah had planted it in my heart and no son of Adam has any right to expel it from there. I called on my beloved in her tent, talked with her there, helped her with the work, and my father and uncle smiled thoughtfully when they observed how I hastened to my girl or returned from her. They remembered the time of their first love.

"When I started to take part in raids and war expeditions I could join my sweetheart where and whenever I wanted to. I helped her water the camels, draw the water, strike and pitch the tent, nay, sometimes I even brought her water and fuel, attended her on the march, and paid her visits in the evening. Usually we met in a tent that was either vacant or seldom visited. A Sharari woman, whose husband was serving as a herdsman, gladly lent me her small tent for meetings with my sweetheart. There in the cold season of the year we sat all night by the fire, parting only when the morning star appeared. In the warm season, especially when camping in the Nefud, we sat on a sand drift in the shade of a tall *ghaza* bush to talk of everything and nothing. How often my sweetheart declared to me:

" 'You are the slumber of mine eyes; you are my desire; my food and my drink; you are my creed.'

"And I, a foolish boy, repeated what I used to hear from fools similar to me: 'I wish to fast and pray, but only in honor of those with loosened hair; in honor of Allah's countenance I will not pray.' Or: 'I will not pray until I get her who warms me in her broad sleeves; then I will pray.'

"Between my sweetheart and myself there lay my sharp saber drawn. At the beginning of each of our meetings, especially when we were alone, I swore:

" 'Between you and me, my white one, Allah stands. May He punish me with this saber, should I abuse your confidence and deprive you of the most precious thing you have.' "

"Were you allowed by your kin to choose freely the object of your love?"

"No member of the kin has the right or the might to compel love, but each has the right to determine whom he may take for wife. In the choice of a sweetheart the Rweyli is almost wholly free, but in the choice of a wife he is limited. He must not marry the divorced wife of his father nor her daughter, not even if she was begotten by another man. He is not allowed to marry the divorced wife of his son or his son's widow, the mother of his wife, the daughter of his brother or sister. Neither may he marry his foster sister. No member of the Eben Shalan kin will take to wife a daughter of the Hwetat or Beni Atiyye tribes nor allow his daughters to marry any of them. Neither the Hwetat nor Beni Atiyye are by birth equal to the Eben Shalan because they paid, as late as during my grandfather's life, a tax for protection to the despised Shararat tribe and camped with them as their protected neighbors.

"No Rweyli dares marry a member of the Sleyb, Hawazem, Fheyjat, Shararat, or Azem tribes. All these are also called Hteym. They have their chiefs and their local organization, they live in tents and breed camels just like the other Bedouins, and yet they are not held in esteem. The reason is that they pay a tax for protection; that they are able neither to protect themselves nor to gain full independence. Being thus compelled to buy the protection of the more vigorous tribes, they are not allowed to enter into blood relationship with their protectors. They

are *khwan*—they pay *khwa*—and their sons will pay too. Their countenance, or honor, is as white as that of the Rwala, but they are not held in the same esteem. They do not live with the Bedouins as strangers but as neighbors. If they serve them, they serve as free servants, which is not considered a disgrace since members of large Bedouin tribes also hire themselves as servants or mercenaries to the more powerful chiefs.

"A Rweyli may not marry the daughter of a blacksmith or other mechanic who camps with us or lives in our settlements. It is said of them that they have no recognized genealogy and even that nothing is known about their true descent as they marry newcomers from various towns, settlements, and tribes regardless of whether they are autonomous, free, dependent, or slaves.

"Marriages with slaves or rather negroes are also forbidden. A man marrying a slave would be killed by his kin. No one dares defile the blood of his kin.

"Moreover there are inequalities among the free Arab tribes. All those belonging to the Aneze group consider themselves aristocrats, hold the other tribes in contempt, and dislike forming matrimonial bonds with them. The children born of such wedlock often hear these ironical remarks:

" 'You will come to naught, for you are only half a Rweyli; blood will not mix well with blood; you will resemble your mother's kin.'

"The children of parents descended from the respectable old Aneze families are the best. Yet even here the bridegroom is not entirely free in choosing a wife, for according to the ancient custom every girl is to wed the nearest young relative whom it is permissible to marry. This is, generally, the son of her father's cousin. Should

this cousin have no sons or the grandfather no brothers, the girl falls to the nearest kinsman descended from the great-grandfather's brother. The nearest kinsman occasionally claims the girl exclusively for himself but, even if he does not, the girl cannot marry without his consent for it is said: 'No one but the nearest kinsman can tie or untie her.' Only when her father wants to marry again and gives her in exchange for his new wife, is the nearest kinsman's claim null and void. On the other hand if the girl refuses to be wedded to her nearest kinsman, he may kill her without becoming liable for compensation.

"If the nearest kinsman knows that the girl will not hear of him, being already in love with someone else, he forbids the marriage and the girl grows old. If the father of the girl claimed by her nearest kinsman dies and the girl loves another, she goes immediately after the father's death to the relative who claims her exclusively for himself and says: 'My father has passed away; I want you to release my neck; I want you to release me in return for my father, who has passed away.' The kinsman is expected to take pity on her and allow her freely to choose a husband for herself but nobody can compel him to do so.

"In case of his refusal there is nothing left for the girl but to elope. She flees with her youth to some distant tribe; there they put themselves under the protection of a powerful chief. They can then marry and live as man and wife in the same tent but they are always threatened with the revenge of the nearest kinsman. An elopement is punished in the same way as murder, and the thirst for revenge must be satisfied.

"Ajaj al-Msehi was in love with a Rwala girl and wanted to marry her. To this her nearest kinsman would not consent. After three years of hopeless love Ajaj fled

with his sweetheart to the tribes camping in the neighborhood of the Hawran. As soon next morning as the news spread that the lovers had escaped, the nearest kinsman and his kinsfolk mounted their camels and went in pursuit of the lovers. But Ajaj reached his destination, was given a tent, and was united to the girl in marriage. His kinsfolk offered the pursuing relative a ransom, but the latter steadily refused. Leaving his tent two months afterwards, he went in search of Ajaj, whom he found and killed, with his young bride. Returning home, he demanded from the kin of Ajaj in the name of his kin the blood money for seven murdered men, for the murder of an eloped woman is valued at that of seven men. Her lover should not have eloped with her, but, having done so, he should have protected her better, knowing the danger with which she was threatened.

"If the girl's kinsman kills the man who has eloped with her, he pays only half of the blood money, as the eloper was himself the cause of his own death.

"Dhiban, the white slave of Eben Mejwel's family, fell in love with a Rwala girl, who returned his affection. Both knew that they could never belong to each other, for a slave, though white, dares not marry even the poorest Rwala woman. So they decided to escape to some settled country and to live in one of the villages there. But they were pursued and the girl was killed by her own brother.

"A single Rweyli of the Abdelle clan eloped with a white slave girl. The search for him proved useless—he disappeared without leaving a trace. Should he ever return, he would be killed by his own kin.

"Now, Musa, you know our customs in love and marriage. You asked me when my son Saud would marry. That depends on Allah. He loves the sister of his mother

who is also the sister of my present wife, and she loves him; still he cannot marry her until Abdallah eben Talal grants his consent."

"Does the girl care about Abdallah?"

"Yes, indeed. True, he is not as closely related to her as Saud is, but he has reserved her for himself. A few days after her birth he said before witnesses to her mother, Turkiyye, that he reserved the girl for himself. Ever since then she has belonged to him and no one may marry her without his consent. We could compel him to release her, but we do not wish to alienate him."

"And what say the brothers of the girl?"

"They say that they will not permit the marriage of their sister with Abdallah, but they will give her to Saud, who is the son of their elder sister."

As the Prince sat by me on Tuesday evening, a Bedouin entered exclaiming:

"Rejoice, O Nuri, in the glad tidings! Four hundred riders on camels and sixty-five camels burdened with loads are coming from Eben Saud to the assistance of Nawwaf. To-day they camp at Mogheyra."

"Have you seen them?"

"No. I heard it from the settlers of Kara."

"Depart quickly!"

FATHER AND SON

On Wednesday the Prince received a letter from Nawwaf notifying him that a force of eight hundred riders upon camels despatched by Eben Saud was coming to his assistance. Trad eben Sattam, who delivered the message, informed me that Nawwaf was on the verge of despair be-

FIG. 24

Rwala boys at a rain pool in the Umm Ghurubat valley

FIG. 25

A rain pool in the Umm Ghurubat valley

FIG. 26

A rain pool in the Umm Ghurubat valley

cause his father did not send him weapons, money, or provisions, and would not even allow his mother to come to him with his boy Sultan. He begged me in the name of Nawwaf to persuade Nuri to abandon his obduracy.

On Thursday we rode on for about two hours only. As soon as my pack camels arrived I pitched my circular tent and began writing my topographical account, which occupied me for the whole of the following day as well, from sunrise to sunset.

Toward evening I heard the sound of several shots and a loud monotonous chanting, and upon stepping out of the tent I saw a long line of armed men from Skaka dancing along grotesquely on their way toward the Prince's tent.

In the evening the scribe Jwad came in, bringing letters from the Imam Eben Saud and from Feysal, brother of the assassinated Prince Saud eben Rashid who had fled to Riyad. Both of these letters were brought by the messenger who had been sent from Mayku by Nuri to Eben Saud at the beginning of February.

On Saturday we migrated again in a northwesterly direction. Soon after noon we dismounted at a new camping ground on the northern fringe of the plain of Layja. In the afternoon I had a long chat with the Prince. I had been requested by many chiefs, among them Fahad eben Mashhur, the next most powerful after Nuri, to use my influence in inducing him to proclaim himself a friend of Eben Saud and announce that he would go to Jowf to assist Nawwaf with all his might. I hesitated long, being averse to interfering between father and son; but hearing the rumor that Nawwaf would throw off his father's yoke, I feared an open war and therefore talked more bluntly to Nuri than I ever had before. The conversation lasted

over two hours. At the end of it the Prince rose and left in silence. What would he do?

The next morning I saw many horseback and camel riders arriving at the Prince's tent. Soon he came out and mounted his riding camel, stopping beside me merely long enough to say: "To Jowf," to which I answered: "Allah be praised!" He was accompanied by over two hundred riders and took money along. Upon two camels were loaded rifles and ammunition for Nawwaf. My intercession had not been amiss, then. He returned that evening.

On Monday we set out again. The Prince mounted his camel at seven o'clock, and at the same moment the camel that carried the symbol of his power, the ornate litter Abu-d-Dhur, also started out.

"Nawwaf greets you, Sheikh Musa," he said to me as he passed. "If Allah wills, that which you have recommended shall be. I know I have no truer friend than you."

On Saturday the Slubi Sanad had been sent out, charged with the task of discovering water and a camp site in the vicinity of the Tawil range. He did not return until early Monday morning when he reported that he had found good pasture, fresh perennial growths especially. There were no annuals anywhere, he said, but the grasses that are called *shetil* (late annuals) might yet come up if a sufficient rain should fall.

"Have you seen any raiding bands?" asked the Prince.

"No. I have seen only the traces of about forty riders."

The western sky was overcast with dark clouds in which were flashes of lightning. Portions of the clouds were being driven by the west wind and rain from them sprinkled us five times; but we pulled our cloaks over our heads and went on. After some time the Prince cantered

ahead to find a good site. He came back in half an hour, turned to the south-southeast, and we encamped in a sandy hollow.

On Tuesday the folding of the tents was begun before dawn and the clan started on the march in a southeasterly direction. We came to several sand drifts bearing green bushes of *ghaza* and the Prince resolved to camp there. He jumped off his camel and pointed out to me the spot where I should pitch my tent. An hour later the pinkish drifts with their green *ghaza* bushes were dotted with hundreds upon hundreds of large and small black tents. The clear, bright blue sky looked as if it had been washed and the black eastern edge of the Tawil range was bathed in gold.

Meantime a messenger had come from Nawwaf with the report that in the night between Sunday and Monday he had been attacked by the warriors of Eben Rashid, who were, however, repulsed and later routed. Their commander sought to protect himself in the fleeing throng, but was shot and with him fell two women, while four other women were wounded. Five warriors of Eben Rashid were captured and immediately killed. After this news small bands mounted on camels kept leaving us to harass the Shammar clans. Thus did Prince Nuri open war upon the subjects of Eben Rashid.

GUERILLA WARFARE WITH THE SHAMMAR

On Wednesday, April 28, I occupied myself with my ethnographical notes. Toward evening I heard cheering cries that signified victory: the raiding band of Dughman was returning with one hundred and fifty head of sheep

and goats which they had captured from the Kreshe clan. Nawwaf had sent Rashrash, the son of Adhub, for rifles and ammunition, and he returned the same evening with forty camels carrying eleven thousand cartridges and forty rifles. The Prince had bought them from the merchants of Kasim. Nuri wrote to the slave of Eben Subhan, who was still in the stronghold district of Khadhne, asking him to come and negotiate with him as to the manner in which he would surrender Khadhne and Mared, as he desired to secure for himself the entire basin of Jowf with all its settlements, either through mediation or by force. Should the emissary fail to present himself, Nuri would consider this as a sign of enmity and a signal for war.

Nuri was completely transformed. He was daily despatching small raiding bands against the Shammar and stronger ones against the opponents of Nawwaf in the settlement of Jowf. The Rwala were pleased with him and hopeful of crushing the power of Eben Rashid, whose abuses they had endured for so many years.

Thursday and Friday we advanced in a northeasterly direction. Friday morning during the march we were overtaken by two Sleyb who told the Prince they had seen the tracks of about twenty camel riders trending from the northwest to the southeast. The Prince remarked that it was probably the emissary of Eben Subhan, minister of Eben Rashid, with his retinue and that he must not fail to capture him and especially the letters he carried. Eighty-two riders supplied themselves with water and the necessary provisions and hurriedly rode after the emissary in the direction indicated. We trudged along slowly until twelve o'clock when the Prince designated a new camp site.

On Saturday I was busy supplementing my notes on the habits and customs of the Rwala. My informant Hmar

abu Awwad, who, it will be remembered, had recently remarried, was very drowsy and wished to lie down in my tent and sleep. Like all Bedouins, he was accustomed to take to bed during the hot season sometime between seven and ten o'clock. Such repose is called *zaha*. At this time the entire camp is lifeless. The men retire into the rooms for women, the entrances are covered to secure privacy, and everyone slumbers except the small boys and girls, who romp about.

Hmar had pestered me for several days by begging for a tonic that would restore his waning vigor; he was convinced that among my many drugs I must have something that could rejuvenate him. He was then about eighty years old and had a youthful wife. He would not believe that I could not help him and kept maintaining that I did not want to do so. Accordingly he went to the Prince and begged him to intercede with me in his behalf. Presently he came back with the Prince and said:

"Should you not, Musa, give me any of that medicine, I shall have to return to my wife with my face blackened. I have promised her surely to bring from you this very necessary medicine and you—may Allah prolong your life!—would you now blacken my face? My honor heretofore has been white. If you like me, do not blacken me in my old age."

On Sunday we changed our camp to another place, proceeding toward the northeast. Soon we were joined by Adhub, Mamduh, Trad, and others, who had pursued Eben Subhan's emissary and his Shammar and had returned during the night. Adhub related:

"We overtook the party on Friday night far to the southeast of the wells of Shezhizh. At first the Shammar merely put the question: 'Who are you riders upon

camels?' but then, quickly recognizing us, they fired upon us and turned to flee. We pursued, striving to encircle them. Realizing the impossibility of escape, some of the Shammar jumped off their saddles and hid among the *ghaza* bushes, while others surrendered their weapons. Four of them were shot to death, one was mortally wounded. One of them, named Rayan, would have been able to escape, as he had a swift camel; but I wanted the camel. I therefore called to the Shammari to surrender, promising to spare his life and to give him another animal. Concluding that I, who likewise was riding an excellent mount, might overtake him or shoot him down, Rayan heeded my challenge, surrendered, and received for his fine runner an old worn-out camel. Not another camel was left to any of the Shammar and we took not only their animals but their weapons and even their provisions and water. Dreading thirst in the center of the sandy Nefud, the Shammar begged us to shoot them on the spot, but we declined to do so, saying: 'We should blacken our own faces by killing the defenseless.' "

As I learned later, not one of them ever returned to his clan. The Prince, with whom I discussed the episode, said carelessly:

"The sandy desert of the Nefud wants her sacrifices, therefore we must render them unto her."

We rode on a level plain covered with coarse gravel; all the plants were grazed off. Then we descended to the basin of Juba and reached the settlement of Kara where we encamped on the same spot as before, at the southern end of the village (Figs. 22, 23). On our arrival the settlers hastened to reap their last wheat: they did not trust the camels of their friends the Rwala. The air was charged with dust and sand, the heat unbearable. The camels with loads did not reach us until afternoon.

On Monday I invited the Slubi Sanad to come to my tent that I might discuss with him the customs and habits of his kinsmen. I labored with him for two hours, but to no purpose. He kept contradicting himself, asking for food and tobacco, leisurely exploring his shirt, and throwing all about what he found in it. Accordingly I sent for another Slubi, Faraj. This man responded with intelligent statements at first; but Sanad, who was loitering about the tent outside, called to him:

"Why do you teach him? He will be paid for every word in gold, but what will you get?" Thereupon Faraj became silent and I had to stop my work. When I complained to the Prince about it, he said:

"Do you not know, Musa, that the Sleyb are the worst scoundrels in the desert? Cursed be their ancestors for a progeny of such dogs!"

In the afternoon I continued making notes of the songs and verses of the Rwala and kept on with this occupation for several days from sunrise to sunset. The scribe Jwad was constantly bringing me new informants, whom the Prince exhorted to be attentive and thoughtful. This kind of work was very wearing on the nerves, especially since the temperature in the tent was over 104° F. all day long. The west breeze, always so refreshing, could not reach us, for the settlement of Kara is situated in a basin and behind a cliff. In addition to this we had a sandstorm each evening which tore down many of the tents and filled our eyes and pores with sand.

NURI AT HOME

The tent of the Prince was full of warriors, men from Skaka who kept coming to ask him for rifles and ammuni-

tion. On an average, he entertained fifty persons every day and yet he himself was hungry most of the time. As host he was not allowed to eat with his guests and there was nobody to serve him in the women's compartment, for his young wife preferred to stay with her relatives, and the serving women and slave women cared most for their children and husbands. The Prince was not related to them; he was a stranger.

Yet there were women relatives in his tent. Staying with him were his two daughters who had run away from their husbands; but they were she-dogs, as the Prince was wont to call them, not fit for anything. They would usually sit in the tent drinking coffee, smoking their long pipes, and listening to the talk of their numerous visitors. Even while the tent was being folded or pitched they would repose in the shade of their litters and wait until the slaves tied the litters on the camels; then they would put in their fluffy blankets, seat themselves upon them, and watch the men and women passing by. They were not at all particular about dirt. Only once did I see one of them, Salha, whose mother was a Shammariyye, wash her white kerchief. Although her younger sister and Nuri's young wife were sitting by her at the time, chatting with her and scratching their heads repeatedly, it did not occur to them to wash their own dirty kerchiefs or, for that matter, their hands or their hair. The scribe Jwad, whose attention I called to it, said:

"Salha was not reared in the tent of the Prince; she was raised by the relatives of her mother, whom the Prince had divorced, where there were not so many slave women as there are in the tent of the Prince or in the tent of Turkiyye, whence his young wife comes. The women are

accustomed to change their clothes only when the slave woman brings them new ones."

It appeared to me that Prince Nuri also changed his clothing or had it cleaned only when compelled by someone to do so. Often I heard the scribe reproach him about his looks and urge him to put on new garments. He could not do so in his tent, however, for that was always full of people; and at night he had to hide under his head the clothes he took off, for, should any slave or servant see one of the Prince's garments lying about, he would immediately appropriate it.

"The pocket of the Prince is deep and wide, the Prince will not be walking about naked," say the slaves and servants. In his relations with me he saw that I demanded cleanliness in everything; hence he washed and changed his clothing more frequently, doing so always in my tent. His own tent was full of women, yet it was next to impossible for him to find one who would do his washing. He asked me frequently to let my servant Naser wash his shirt, but I persistently refused to agree to it, always remarking that this kind of work was better suited to a woman.

"By Allah, do not believe it, O Musa! If I entrust any of the slave women with my shirt, she returns it to me more soiled than it was when she took it." The scribe was later charged with the task of finding a woman in one of the settlements who would wash for Prince Nuri eben Shalan, King of Northern Arabia, as he was called. Poor king, indeed!

The raiding bands of the Rwala were pressing hard upon the Shammar of Eben Rmal and Eben Rakhis and were returning with much booty; but, according to news brought by a Slubi to Nawwaf, who hastened to notify his

father, Zamel eben Subhan, minister of the youthful Saud eben Rashid, had just sent ammunition and provisions to the garrison in Mared and Khadhne. The Prince immediately despatched a large detail of camel riders to occupy the neighborhood of the wells of Shezhizh and the pass of Mustanda in the Tawil range; and on Thursday evening the riders returned with the prize. They had concealed themselves in the hollows of the sandy desert, stationed sentries upon the highest sand hills, and waited until these should espy the camels carrying the supplies to Jowf. They did not have to wait long, for the caravan was sighted on Wednesday before noon. Surrounding it, they waited until its members retired and at dawn, when the Bedouins sleep soundest, they captured it. I did not learn what became of the men accompanying the camels—the Rwala failed to mention that. As none of them ever reached Jowf or Kara, however, it is evident that they all perished; but whether by the weapons of the Rwala or by thirst and hunger, only Allah and the Rwala know.

On Wednesday a Slubi brought word to the Prince that eight camels carrying weapons and dry goods had arrived from Mashhad—that is, from Kerbela—at the camp of the Sleyb in Bweytat. The camels and loads were the property of merchants hailing from Mashhad and residing in the settlement of Skaka with the Kreshe, enemies of the Rwala. These Mashahde were in a difficult position. As merchants they wished to sell not only to the Kreshe and the Shammar clans, but to the Maazhle and the Rwala as well, and hence they were desirous of peace; but, since they resided with the Kreshe and sold them weapons and ammunition, they alienated the Maazhle and the Rwala. They had sent many messages and gifts to Nuri, appealing to him for peace and trying to excuse their dealings.

"Should we not sell arms to the Kreshe, how would they treat us?" they pleaded. "They would demolish our houses and rob us of our property; and whether they would spare our necks Allah only knows."

"You supply our enemies with arms and ammunition, therefore you are to blame for their defiance, and I do not want to deal with you," responded Nuri curtly.

When, therefore, the caravan of the Mashahde was detected, fifteen young men immediately saddled their mares and rode out to meet it, but they returned empty-handed; for as soon as the Sleyb, who sided both with the Rwala and the Shammar, perceived the cavalcade, they hid the camels of the Mashahde in a small basin. The ground being stony, the Rwala could not find any tracks, and as they had not taken along any water for their horses they were obliged to return. Nevertheless, they stationed sentries at the wells of Swer and Mogheyra and also watched in the vicinity of Skaka. There and at Jowf fighting was the order of the day. Both sides did their utmost to wreck the greatest possible number of garden walls and to cut down the most palms.

On Monday morning I was awakened by the grumbling of camels that were being loaded by the Prince's slaves in front of his tent. We were moving again although the Prince had told me we should remain at Kara for at least seven days. How pleased I had been at the prospect of continuing my scientific work without interruption! And now there was migration!

SOJOURN IN THE OASIS

SHORTLY before sunrise the Prince came to ask whether I was going with him.

"I shall leave the women, the tents, and the stores in Kara," he said, "and go east with only the herds and mares, and I shall return within the next five or six days. The Sleyb told me during the night that they had found good pasture, so that I should like to stay there until the end of this month."

When I found the Prince was going to approximately the same camping grounds that I had visited already, I immediately responded that I should prefer to remain in Kara and work; whereupon he recommended that I move my tents into the garden of the chief Zaher eben Selim, where they would be better protected than on the present camp site. His scribe wished to remain behind with me. Thus we moved into the gardens adjoining the house of Zaher and pitched our tents under the palms, the Prince sending word to Zaher by the slave Amer to permit nobody to enter my tent and to watch over us day and night. After seeing my luggage safely housed, I went over to the Prince to bid him good-by and to commend my camels to his care.

"That is not necessary, Brother Musa," he answered. "Your belongings are deeper within me than my own, and, by Allah, I speak the truth."

I ordered my herdsman Mufazzi always to stay with my camels among the other herds and never to pass the night in any other place than where the Prince and his party lodged. Presently Nuri departed with most of the men, leaving the women and children in the settlement. Jwad and I returned to my notes on folklore and I did not leave the tent until after sundown.

The nights were not restful. Thirty paces from my tent had been pitched the tent of a Shammari whose daughter was seriously ill. The poor girl moaned, coughed, and

lamented day and night, until finally on Sunday death liberated her. They shrouded her in her own shirt and buried her before dawn.

Every night after midnight four laborers with three camels came into the garden to draw water from a well about forty paces from my tent and to water the palms. They accompanied their work with singing and yells intended to urge on the camels to steadiness and speed; if the camels failed to respond promptly, the drivers emphasized their persuasions with louder yells and blows. The workmen gave particular attention to the palms that were in bloom, pushing away the foliage nearest to the blossoms and freeing the leaves of thorns. They shook the pollen from the male upon the female blossoms and inserted a branch with male blossoms on it into the midst of branches bearing female blossoms, tying the two into a cluster. Because male blossoms are slow in showing themselves, the crown of each of the palms was examined every second or third day. Each tree had to be watered every fifth day. The water was first drawn into a large reservoir from which it flowed in shallow ditches to the individual trees, where it was caught and held in a sort of bowl from four to six feet in diameter hollowed out in the soil around the base of each tree.

On Tuesday we learned that at the wells of Swer the chief Zeben al-Kwechbi had subdued a band of the Shammar who were seeking the Rwala in the depression of Sirhan. Beyond the settlement of Chaf they had captured camels which carried salt. Returning with the booty across the volcanic territory over Amud and the head of the valley of Shweyhet, they had succeeded in reaching Swer where they considered themselves out of danger as they thought some of their clans were camping in Bweytat. But

they were not destined to return to these relatives. A certain Kwechbi, prowling about in search of grass for his mare, sighted them just as they were relaxing during the heat of noon and summoned his fellow tribesmen. The Shammar lost all their booty and all their camels besides. To the Rwala had also fallen two camels carrying goods of the Mashahde to Skaka. They had, it seemed, promised a camel to a certain Slubi, who, to make sure of it, betrayed his own fellow tribesmen to the Rwala by pointing out the route on which they could capture the booty.

On Thursday there came to the settlement of Kara several families of the Nseyr clan, who had been camping with the Shammar in the district of Hzul but who had migrated immediately after the declaration of war between the Shammar and the Rwala. Their chief asked me where Prince Nuri's camp was and told me that the men of Eben Saud had approached the city of Hayel, the residence of Eben Rashid. According to him, Eben Rashid's minister, Zamel eben Subhan, was encamped with his fighters at the fortress of Truba, and Eben Saud had sent against him a small detachment with orders to attack the enemy and then flee. This was done. Eben Subhan gave pursuit and in his absence Eben Saud and his men attacked his camp, assaulted him from the rear, and captured all the white tents of Eben Rashid's slaves as well as their horses and camels. Only thirty riders succeeded in fleeing upon horseback to Hayel. The soldiery of Eben Saud, the man said, was now in the vicinity of Baka (or Tayyebt Ism, as this settlement is also called) where it menaced all the roads converging on Hayel.

On Sunday there came to us a Slubi from Jowf bringing news that the Dughman had routed a raiding band

of the Tuman, who are affiliated with the Shammar, and had captured fifty-eight riding camels. Nawwaf, he said, was building a strong tower northwest of Mared, whence he intended to fire upon his enemies.

On Monday morning, May 17, I heard in front of my tent the grumbling of a camel that was being forced to kneel. Peering out, I saw the Prince, who rushed up to me with a hearty greeting, sweat streaming down his face. His people were migrating to Kara and he had hastened ahead upon his fine animal that he might see me as soon as possible, he said. I readily believed that he had hastened to me, though less for my sake than in anticipation of the full meal and the rest that he knew awaited him in my tent. He had been moving about every day for the last eight days, passing not a single night inside a tent. He complained of not having found abundant pasture anywhere nor a sufficient quantity of water, and twice they had had to keep riding all night because of the appearance of enemy raiders. When I asked him about my camels he replied that my two best riding animals had been stolen. My herdsman Mufazzi did not lodge near his animals, he said, but went to his relatives on the outskirts of the camp, and in his absence two Shammar who served with the Rwala had taken my two fine animals and escaped upon them. They had stolen provisions, water bags, and firearms from their masters, and camels from me. The Prince said that he had demanded compensation from the masters for my animals and would assist me to my rights, otherwise his face would remain blackened.

"Prince, you are in duty bound to do so," I said. "According to your customs a host or a master is responsible for the acts of his guest or his servant. This is known to everybody and is conceded by all. Should you not

compel the masters of these thieves to make retribution it would be clear that you do not concern yourself with the property of your friend and neighbor. The Prince Nuri eben Shalan surely will not let this come to pass."

"By Allah, I shall not let it happen; I know you bought both of the stolen animals for 158 *mejidiyyat* ($142.20), but this year camels are lank and do not fetch as much as last year. I appraised your animals at 100 *mejidiyyat* ($90). If you agree, the masters shall pay you this sum." I agreed and asked the Prince to expedite the settlement of the matter.

In the night the scribe Jwad brought me word from the Prince that we were to remain in Kara until Saturday. This pleased me, for I expected to finish by then the greater portion of my notes on folklore. The Prince came to see me every day; but, if he saw that I was very busy, he would keep quiet or else help me by sending away anyone who was bent on paying me a visit.

Many of the chiefs, the young ones especially, were desirous of procuring various articles from me, but they did not dare ask me for them. It was generally known that the Prince was my close friend; but I did not allow any of the chiefs to become too intimate. My deportment towards them all was kindly and courteous, but it was reserved whenever any of them sought to treat me as his equal. In such a case I pretended not to hear what was said, or else I replied curtly in the negative, immediately afterwards engaging the man in a pleasant conversation as though nothing had happened. I never permitted myself to accept an invitation to supper from any of the younger chiefs and I never visited any of them. It was very seldom that I entered the tent of the Prince and when I did I stayed but a little while. My round tent was always

Fig. 27

From the Hsaydet umm Ghurubat looking south

Fig. 28

My tents in the camp at Shomeri, near Azrak

open to him, but it was closed to the other chiefs. They were permitted to seat themselves in my large tent, whence I would invite one or another to my presence. I never greeted the younger chiefs first, but as soon as one of them saluted me I returned the greeting and inquired in a friendly manner as to this or that. If anyone failed to greet me, I rode by as though I neither saw nor heard him.

My raids, as they called my scientific expeditions, were known to all, and no one doubted my courage. Once, when the youthful chief Mamduh eben Sattam, who was famous for his bravery, sought to embarrass me by asking whether I had no fears while thus rambling alone in the unknown desert, I answered him in the presence of the other chiefs:

"What is fear, O Mamduh? What is the unknown desert? I was roaming through it on a camel's back when you were being carried through it in a saddlebag."

Mamduh's face flushed and he retreated. In the bags that are tied to camel saddles the slaves on marches put the young sons of their masters who are too young to know how to ride.

It was through such demeanor that I had so won the respect of the Prince's family that none of the young chiefs dared to prejudice anyone against me; and it was only for the sake of maintaining this strong position that I demanded reimbursement for my stolen animals. It was to be proved whether the Prince would or would not actually demonstrate his friendship for me.

On Thursday afternoon, May 20, I finished most of my notes, thus carrying out an important part of my scientific work. Toward evening I went with Zaher to visit a tent where on the morrow several boys were to be circumcized. In front of it girls were dancing. On the way back we stopped to examine the rock of Meshrefe, where there

was once a small fortress. On the rock, which was artificially hewn, I discovered a brief Nabatæan inscription to which I decided to return on the morrow, as I could not make it out very well in the fading light.

On Friday I felt very tired. I had been drinking a good deal of black coffee lately to sustain the activity of my mind in the prevailing heat, and now I suffered a relapse. I could scarcely get off the bed. The blood throbbed in my head until everything about me seemed to go around in a circle. Naser helped me from my small tent into the larger one, where I sat a while. About noon a violent sandstorm broke over us, which tore down both our tents and forced us to seek protection behind a garden wall. The storm did not subside until after sunset, when it was too late to visit the rock of Meshrefe. In the evening Jwad brought me seventeen Turkish pounds ($76.50) as reimbursement for my stolen camels and, better still, the tidings that on the morrow we were to start on our march to the populated regions. The Prince had kept his word. This fact, together with my joy at the prospect of finally leaving the inner desert, served to raise my spirits.

IX. THROUGH THE SIRHAN DEPRESSION TO SYRIA

THE RWALA SUFFER FROM HUNGER

Off again, May 22, to the southwest. On Sunday we reached the strong house of Mweysen. South of it were many bowlders of multiform shapes suggesting herds of resting cows. The jinn or earthly spirits once reared a flock of cows there which grazed on the plants growing in the rocky soil as well as on the *rimth* and *ghaza* which had their roots in the sand. Allah, however, forbade them to breed the cows and changed them to bowlders.

We deviated somewhat to the northwest to encircle the settlement of Jowf. True, the chief Adhub had asked Nuri to encamp at Jowf, but the Prince feared lest some of the women perish during the fighting; hence we rode through the stony district.

Rashrash, the son of Adhub, joined us. He had come from Nawwaf and had brought letters and greetings for me, together with the news that Nawwaf had married a girl from Jowf a few days before. She was his sixth wife; he had divorced four, and a like fate threatened the fifth one. The latest reports of the victorious advance of Eben Saud had improved Nawwaf's weakened position, and because he was sure now of his father's approbation he was filled with the hope of ultimate victory.

On Monday we were in the saddle before sunrise, circling in a southwesterly direction the hilly stretch in which we had failed to find pasture. The Arabs were

hungry. Since most of the camels had ceased to yield milk because of insufficient food, the majority of the natives had lost their only sustenance. I talked it over with Nuri:

"We are familiar with hunger, Musa. We all know it from our youth and fear it since we know that it is difficult for the hungry to overcome those who have had their fill. There goes a saying: 'The attack of the sated on the hungry is very vile.'

"We know that Heaven is the abode of Allah who looks after us and supplies us with food while the human enemy, who begrudges us everything, inhabits the earth on which we walk. A father often reminds his son: 'He who provides you with everything dwells in Heaven; he who hinders you dwells on the earth upon which you walk.' It is useless, Musa, to be overanxious about the things for which everyone longs. On every occasion Allah cries out to man:

" 'O my servant, you have desires and I have desires, but all you can do is to carry out the thing that I desire.'

"Hunger forces a man to theft. To take from an enemy or a stranger all that he has is not a sin but to steal anything from a neighbor or fellow tribesman is a sin, and Allah does not bless the thing that He has forbidden.

"As you know, Musa, we eat regularly twice a day. Our main and most abundant meal is supper which we have after sunset. Shortly before noon there is lunch, at which we merely drink milk or eat what is left of supper or a piece of bread from the previous day. Only for important guests do we bake fresh bread and prepare some sort of a meal. If we have a piece of dry bread and can soak it in water we boast of having eaten well.

"Breakfast is unknown to us. In order to loosen the spittle we eat a grain of salt, a morsel of bread, or gulp

down some milk. On long marches we have to keep going with this breakfast until evening because then we have no luncheon. We know that we shall eat only after sunset and are grateful to Allah if He gives us a chance of eating our fill at least once a week. Often there is not even a cup of cold, sour milk for supper.

"Bread is a delicacy and a bread cake forms a precious gift which a girl presents to her youthful lover as proof of her sacrificing love. A chief's daughter loved a poor Rweyli. Although often upbraided for this she remained faithful to the man of her choice. Once they camped in the midst of good pasture, but far from water, so that occasionally they suffered from thirst. As the well was very far and the region not safe only young men went to bring water, the lover of the chief's daughter among them. She did not drink for two days, saving up her share so that she could welcome her darling with a dainty dish when he returned. When on the third day the outposts signaled with kerchiefs tied to their long spears that the youths were returning with full water bags, the girl quickly prepared the ingredients, added plenty of butter, and baked a small delicate cake. With this in her hand she mounted a she-camel and rode out to meet the young men bringing in the water supply. The women generally ride out with a small water pouch whenever they have thirsty children at home or want to prepare a meal for the hungry ones, for the camels carrying the full water bags move but slowly, while a woman on a riding camel can get her pouch filled from the first youth she meets and return quickly. As soon, then, as the chief's daughter met the first young man with water she was told to take as much as she needed; but this she declined, saying: 'Our young man with water rides in the rear.'

This was repeated several times. At last she sighted her lover. He drove before him two camels, each of which carried two large water bags made of camel's hide and holding about one hundred and fifty quarts each; on a third, less burdened, he sat himself.

"'Give me some water,' begged the girl.

"'You have met so many young men. Did none of them offer you water? If you did not get a drink from them, you will not get it from me!'

"The girl pulled out the appetizing cake. The hungry lover looked at it longingly but she threw it to a dog near by and said:

"'I shall not drink from you; you will not eat from me any more!'

"Jumping down from the camel the youth now poured out water for her, but she refused it. When he called on her in the evening, she drove him away."

Shortly after noon the Prince made his camel kneel, a signal that the camp site had been chosen. Some of the chiefs went to Jowf. I occupied myself with notes on the poems and songs of the Rwala. Towards evening an alarm cry was heard. Straightway the fighters, headed by the Prince, set out to the south but failing to find the enemy they returned about midnight all worn out.

FROM THE HISTORY OF ARABIA DESERTA

I DROPPED into reflections comparing the desert life of to-day with that depicted in various ancient accounts. The Assyrian records mention Arabia and the Arabs as early as the ninth century B.C. To them Arabia means the steppe or desert and the Arabs were people migrating in it. From

their inscriptions it is evident that in the first millennium B.C. the inhabitants of northern Arabia lived in the same way as to-day. They consisted of different tribes who, according to the Bible, were descended from Ishmael. The tribes took an active part in the political life of the neighboring settled lands and maintained connections with the Sabæans, lords of the important trade routes and inhabitants of southwestern Arabia.

When the settlers of the adjacent Syria or Babylonia rose in rebellion against the great Assyrian kings, they were readily helped by the Arabian tribes who undertook countless raids on the loyal settlements. Occasionally military expeditions entered Arabia, usually from the north or the west. The great King Sennacherib penetrated into Arabia from the east after having brought to obedience Babylonia, where the rebellious Arabs had found efficient support. From Babylonia Sennacherib came to the oasis of Adumu, Jowf or Dumat al-Jandaliyye of to-day, and conquered it. There the Arabs had their religious center and esteemed its priestesses as their queens, nominally at least. The real lords were the different powerful chiefs, who continued to oppose the Assyrian king even though he had gained the priestesses or queens of the oasis of Adumu.

The Kedar and the Nebayot, known also in the Bible, were the most powerful of Arabian tribes. The Kedar had their center close to the Hawran, the Nabatæans in the southern part of the depression of Sirhan. At the end of the first millennium B.C. the Nabatæans conquered the oasis of Jowf and penetrated to the west into Edom proper, becoming lords of the vicinity of the ancient site of Kadesh. As they were in possession of the important trade route that led through the depression of Sirhan as

well as of a part of that which connected southwestern Arabia with Phœnicia and Egypt, their main occupation was trade. They founded their own commercial center, known as Petra to the Greeks and Romans and as Wadi Musa to the Arabs.

The northern part of the depression of Sirhan belonged to the Khazu and Buz tribes who were related to the Biblical Job.

The Bible refers to the inner desert as Kedem and to its inhabitants as Bene Kedem, which expression denotes the same as the classical Saraceni and the modern Sherkiyye or Bedouins. The Bible never identifies the Arabs with the Bene Kedem.

In Arabia of to-day the term Arab denotes all who live under tents of goat's hair, therefore all nomads regardless of their occupation or of the location of their camps. Those Arabs who raise camels and dwell either constantly or at least half a year in the inner desert are called Bedw or Sherkiyye. The latter word is derived from *sherk*, the term applied not only to the direction east but also to the inner desert in central Arabia. Whoever marches through this region, whether he goes west, or east, or south, is spoken of as going into the *sherk*. The Biblical Kedem refers to exactly the same region as the Arabic *sherk*.

The Bene Kedem were famous for their wisdom. Only the wisdom of Solomon towered above theirs. Therefore the homeland of the Wise Men who followed the star to Jerusalem may be sought in the Arabian desert among the wise Bene Kedem.

The Greek and Latin writers give the name of Arabia Deserta, Desert Arabia, to that part of Arabia which stretches from the sandy Nefud in the south as far as the wells of Eleyyaniyye in the north, where I worked before

the countenance of Prince Nuri. The Arabic writers call this part Samawa. During the continuous struggles between the Roman and Persian empires the nomads of the western half of Arabia Deserta helped the Romans whereas those of the eastern half supported the Persians. Both Persians and Romans would try to gain the support of the most powerful chief, grant him freedom, and recognize him as king. In the western part of Arabia the kings of the Ghassan tribe, who had their center around Hawran, distinguished themselves. In the Persian or eastern part of Arabia Deserta the kings were the chiefs of the Lakhm tribe, who lived in the town of Hira near the modern Nejef by the Euphrates.

In the first centuries of Islam the head chiefs of the Kalb tribe became heirs of the Ghassan, whereas the inheritance of the Lakhm fell to the head chiefs of the Asad and later of the Khafaje tribes. But these lacked the power and fame which the Lakhmite and Ghassanian kings possessed. To-day there camp in Arabia Deserta the tribes of the Aneze group of which the foremost are the Rwala, headed by the prudent and persevering chiefs of the Eben Shalan family.

"WHITE AS CLEFT PEARLS"

On Wednesday morning the alarm cry was heard again. The Prince was just preparing to have a drink of coffee with me; he did not finish the drink but set down the cup on the floor, leaped upon his mare, and galloped toward the east.

He returned half an hour later, saying he had seen the enemy fleeing south, but they were too far off for him to follow.

We set out toward the northwest. On the way the camel

that was carrying the tent of the Prince threw off the burden and the slave women were not strong enough to reload it. They lamented and cursed the men because they would not help.

The Prince stopped in the sandy strip of Areyzh ad-Desm and under a bush of *ghaza* kindled a small fire upon which we warmed our unfinished coffee. The chief Adhub had hunted down a hare which he threw upon the fire, and when it was baked he divided it among us.

The riding was not hard but it was wearisomely monotonous. The sun was scorching and the wind drove sand into our eyes. I was much pleased when the Prince started to recite the following poem:

"Oh, who will find for me powder of gallnuts and copperas
With which to write on a paper as yet unused,
And who will help me to the verses needed
To allay like gentle winds the storms of my heart?
Many nights my camel lay by the hole of the snake's den,
And even in sleep I thought of her with the white teeth.
Shunning the heat of summer, at Fertazh she hides
On the spurs of Selma, where clear water lies in the rifts.
Wheat bread baked on a red-hot sheet of iron
She eats, and milk of the young white she-camel sips.
With her smiles she uncovers teeth like the white, white snow—
White as cleft pearls.
Her hips, two sand drifts curved by the gentle rain,
A-rest on two calves like the rollers sliding the well-ropes.
She lets one lock of her tresses after another—
The fine braids of her hair—fall down her back.
Like a pilgrim's procession tinkle the rings on her ankles,
And still the rings on her fine thin ankles tinkle.
Like a cautiously stepping gazelle at the head of her flock,

Expressive black eyes turned toward her—so she came.
She is like a white gazelle, with the fragrance of amber,
Leading gazelles in pairs;
Like the sweet-scented flower beside the pond of clear water
Spreading luxuriant leaves which ever tremble.
Five little fingers—and none but I have touched them—
And night-black eyes, that kill, that kill the love-stricken.
Her name is like the branches which incline
To the north—her name!—and none there be to expound it.
O Allah, comforter! Lord of consolation!
Thou Who art rich, though Thy creatures are ever in need!
Thou wilt comfort me, whose love is ivory white,
Tormented! by those that appoint my road, oppressed."

The camels were hungry and ran from one shrub to another seeking to graze. We encamped for a brief time only, for as early as a little after midnight we were again under weigh. The west wind was damp, cold, and very unpleasant. The young camels had lost their mothers in the darkness and growled and wailed, while their mothers emitted a peculiar guttural sound resembling the distant rumbling of thunder. Many a camel could not wait until her youngster appeared but started back on a run to find it, threw off her load, and had to be caught and compelled to kneel by force. She would growl, beat her head, and otherwise act as if desperate.

We reached the wells of Shghar where our thirsty camels were to be watered. Alas, only one of the wells had water in it; the rest of them were either half or wholly filled with earth. The individual families each gathered around a different well which they proceeded to dig out and clean. The Prince also ordered a well to be dug and when the slaves shirked the work he drove them to it with a stick and curses. He then invited me to water my

camels at his well. It took over four hours of hard work to water sixteen camels. There was very little water in the well anyway and, with four groups watering there, only every fifth bucket could be poured out for my camels. At the bottom of the well, which was about twelve feet deep, two men ladled out the water with rather flat bowls and poured it into the bucket. The men who pulled up the filled bucket and poured out the water for the camels kept up their spirits by singing short ditties:

"Alas, I have been kept from my supper
A-pulling the bucket rope.
Not a drop of milk, not a bite to eat have I had."

"Two pomegranates on the stalk,
Or eggs of a pigeon, are her breasts."

"In my slumber I dreamed
Of those adorned with blue tattooing;
May my dream last forever!"

The vicinity of the wells was abundantly overgrown with *msha* [1] bushes, which were covered with berries, either still green or already red and of somewhat salty taste. Both adults and children picked and ate them.

Toward evening the Prince tied in front of my tent a yearling wether that had long, fluffy, black wool and a white head. It was a gift to him from a sheep merchant. When I asked him why he did not kill the wether in his own tent, he answered:

"With you, brother, I may eat to my content at least twice a day, but in my tent I might perhaps not even taste the meat."

[1] *Nitraria tridentata*, Desf.; shrub with white branches, wedge-shaped leaves, hard spines, small yellowish flowers and sweet fruit.

On Saturday we left our camp site at the wells of Shghar and sped toward the northwest. In the evening I learned from the scribe Jwad that Saud, the younger son of the Prince, who lived with his mother in a tent of his own, had not had any barley or flour for four days. So I looked over my provisions, laid aside enough food to last my household from ten to twenty days, and sent the rest of the flour and *burghul* to Saud and his mother. When the Prince learned of it, he said to me:

"The Arabs can and must accustom themselves to suffer from want but you, brother, and your men must have enough to eat."

The Prince, informed of a large raiding party, sent his slaves to urge the belated members of his family to make haste lest they be cut off and robbed.

In the afternoon we dismounted at the wells of Nbaj, where we had encamped once before. I stopped in front of the chief Fahad's tent. The Prince entered the tent at once and I followed, after watering my camel. The Prince greeted me:

"Long live the rider upon this camel!"

To which I replied:

"Allah preserve the life of your children!"

The Prince and then all present rose except the chief Khaled, son of the deceased Prince Sattam, who could only rise halfway. Fahad pointed me to a place opposite the Prince, whereupon the Prince asked me to take a seat beside him. That seat was occupied by Khaled who was leaning upon the same saddle as the Prince. I complied with the Prince's request and Khaled had but to make room. Greeting everyone present, I inquired of Khaled when he had arrived.

Fahad served me with tea and dates. I invited only the

Prince to join me at the meal. After my camels with the luggage had arrived I left the tent to assist at the unloading.

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THROUGH THE SALT MARSH

On Monday morning, May 31, nobody seemed to know whether we should stay or migrate. The Prince was sleeping and no one ventured to wake him. At last he presented himself and directed us to make ready for the march. We headed northwest through the marsh of Nowdan, which is covered for miles with a salty white crust that glitters in many places like smooth ice. We avoided such places, fearing that our camels might slip on them.

Before noon we had to go around a large, brilliantly white expanse of salt. In the west and north we saw many striking mirages.

I rode with the Prince at the head of the tribe; we were singing different ditties of which the Prince liked best the following:

"She who often rides a docile camel
Gives me no sign with her stick.
Who of you still remembers my sweet friend?
Who has looked for her, who has found her?
Far beyond the camp she strays with a small herd:
Toward that pasture I hastened eagerly.
Ah—but I found only the desert. . . .
And the howling of wolves made me flee."

In the afternoon the Prince requested me to lead the tribe while he himself trotted ahead to seek a snug location for the camp. The *salaf*, or armed convoy of the migrating tribe, now rode behind me. When the Prince returned we dismounted. The heat was intense. The Prince had made a shady arbor under a bush and invited me

to sit there with him. I started to carry thither my bag and my saddle to save them from the hundreds and thousands of camels that were passing by. As I lifted the bag there sprang from under it a snake about twenty-four inches long, a finger thick, gray, and speckled. Jwad, the scribe, killed it.

On Tuesday we set out again. First to start out was the camel that carried the Abu-d-Dhur. Then the Prince swung into the saddle and we followed his example. The camel with the Abu-d-Dhur, escorted by slaves and slave women, remained at the head of the pack camels, while the Prince and I rode in front. As soon as the Abu-d-Dhur fell out of sight we stopped to await its approach.

Much caution was required in passing through this marshy lowland. We crossed an arm of the Hazawza. This is a salty swamp from almost the very center of which rises a black hill. The Bedouins say that the hill contains a cave which is full of gold, but that it is impossible to get at it. No one can swim or wade across the swamp and whoever would ride into the Hazawza upon a camel would disappear with his mount before he could take ten steps. The Hazawza would gape open to swallow in a trice the struggling camel and rider, shrieking in vain for help. His companions, though standing perhaps only a few paces off upon solid ground, would have to gaze upon his mortal fight, unable to help him . . . It seemed to me as if a somber veil hung above this sultry marsh.

✧ ✧

ON TRIAL

Messengers informed Nuri of an engagement between Eben Smeyr and the Circassians. The Prince decided to hurry up the march.

"I have heard, Musa, that Trad, called Arefa, who claims to be the son of my brother Fahad, has instigated the Circassians against us. He swore vengeance on me. Now he is angry with his late friend Rsheyd eben Smeyr for his submission to me."

"Why do you call him Arefa?"

"That is a long story, Musa. Order Naser to give us a cup of coffee and I will tell you about it.

"Trad was really the son of Khalaf by the divorced wife of Fahad, my brother. But Trad claimed that he was the son of Fahad and demanded my daughter in marriage. She was brought to the wedding tent, outwitted him, and escaped with her brother Nawwaf. Khalaf then swore that he was Trad's father, and Fahad sent the case to court. The judge took a long iron spoon used in roasting coffee, stuck it in the fire and, when it became red-hot, asked the witnesses to examine Khalaf's tongue. As soon as this had been done the judge quickly lifted the hot spoon to Khalaf's mouth; he licked its red-hot part, rinsed his mouth with water, and showed his tongue to the witnesses anew. As the tongue was not burned they declared Khalaf's oath to be true. The judge received from the latter fifty *mejidiyyat* ($45) as his fee. Trad was acknowledged to be his son and my daughter kept her single state because as Khalaf's son Trad would not be her cousin, and so had no claims on her. From that time Trad has been called Arefa, 'about whom the judge has decided,' the name for judge being with us *arefa*."

We crossed another arm of the Hazawza to the south-east. We had to coax our camels along the narrow paths. Right and left lay the quaggy morass. It seemed to me that I was walking on a frozen lake. Several pack camels broke their legs and had to be left lying in the mire be-

Fig. 29

Castle of Amra from the southwest

Fig. 30

Castle of Amra

side the paths, the men and women carrying the baggage to more solid ground where they added it to the load of other camels.

After having reached firm ground I anxiously sought out my own pack camels to see if any of them had fallen. At last I found them and counted them: not one was missing.

THE ENEMY REPULSED

We proceeded northwestward again. Immediately after noon we pitched camp anew. Shortly after, I saw the Prince beating his young wife with a camel stick. She lay on the ground, retarding the blows with her hands but uttering no sound whatever. I heard no moans, no sighs, yet she was getting a thrashing in full measure. Later, when the Prince came to see me, he inquired whether men of my tribe ever beat their wives. He complained of his young wife's supineness and her carefree way of giving everything into the hands of slaves and slave women who pilfered his stores so thoroughly that nothing whatever was left of them. If he wanted a drink of sour milk he had to solicit it in a stranger's tent even though he owned two hundred female camels. Before we left Kara two loads of dates (about 750 lbs.) had been delivered to him from Skaka and six days later when we encamped at the wells of Shghar there was not a date left; yet he himself had not eaten a single one. As we sat thus engaged in conversation the alarm cry rang out. The Prince leaped to his feet, darted into his tent, threw crosswise over his shoulders two belts with one hundred and twenty Mannlicher cartridges, seized the carbine, and barefooted, with nothing else on but a shirt,

swung into the light saddle of his white mare and galloped off to the west shouting:

"O you who fear death! Hearken and know,
Whom the Angel of Death visiteth, dies.
Though captured she-camels death frees not,
The lingerer with girls is Death's sure prize."

One by one the other riders hurried after him with no mantles or kerchiefs on and their long plaits flying in the air. Four youths speeding by my tent sang a ditty:

"For the eyes of her, peeping through parted tent walls,
Thirsting and longing for one of our glances,
We rescue the captured herds, and the mares
Whose riders we hurled to the ground with our lances."

About twenty minutes later we heard reports of fire-arms first singly, then in volleys. Then the alarm cry was renewed and from all sides rang in the ears the refrain:

"Climb the hill from which we give the alarm,
By your cries summon the wild beasts of this land!
It is the territory of my tribe—
No other I desire."

Even the mares that nursed foals had to be saddled and when these proved insufficient mount camels were gathered, an indication that the enemy were very numerous. To secure our camp from sudden attack we occupied the next oblong tabular hill and thoroughly surveyed the vicinity northeast of the well of Kdayyer; but we could discover nothing, nor could we hear any more shots. Our fighters returned about midnight.

The Prince had deemed his small band of thirty-six, on mares, sufficient to attack an enemy of sixty-five rifles

on camels. Perceiving the Prince with his cavalcade, the enemy had dismounted and forced their camels to kneel in a sheltered hollow while they themselves advanced to take shelter among the thickets that crowned a slight ridge. The Prince, not proposing to risk his horses and fighters in the open, had commanded his men to dismount, tie the horses, and open fire. He himself aimed at the hollow where the camels of the enemy had been hidden.

"I could not see the camels," he explained to me, "but I remembered their general direction and adjusted my carbine to see if it would carry as far as you claimed it would. I fired thrice without knowing whether the bullets had reached their mark. After the fourth shot I heard an outcry. I kept the range and fired three or four times more; and then I saw the camels running out in a panic and leaping on three legs. I had aimed well and the bullets had carried. The enemy were unprepared for an attack upon their mounts. When they heard the alarm of the guards and saw the camels running wild, they quickly left their position, recaptured the camels and fled. We pursued them but our mares' hoofs kept sinking into the swamp and the enemy escaped. I did not permit the camel riders to take up the pursuit after they came to our assistance. Night had set in and they would have had to go round the arm of the Hazawza marsh, and how were they to find the enemy when their tracks were mingled with those of our own camels? Two of their animals were found dead, and many bloody streaks bore witness to the wounds suffered either by the fighters or the animals. The enemy have had a taste of their own blood and certainly will not hinder us any more."

The salty taste of the plants made us thirsty. About midnight there was a partial eclipse of the moon. Two

thirds of the moon's face was obscured by a reddish veil; only the right or western edge remained bright. The Bedouins, men as well as women, were anxious and kept shouting, beating copper kettles, even shooting, in order to scare away the monster, *hawt*, and liberate the moon. The Prince came to ask me what the phenomenon signified. . . .

Two men who had a dispute to settle came to the Prince for assistance. One was a Rweyli, the other a Sharari. Several days before, they had exchanged riding camels. The Rweyli gave to the Sharari his camel, adding a shirt and two kerchiefs, and in return received the camel which heretofore had been ridden by the Sharari. On Wednesday the Rweyli mounted the exchanged camel in pursuit of the enemy. On Thursday the beast was at first unable to rise and when she finally did get up she limped perceptibly with her right front leg. The Rweyli accused the Sharari of withholding from him the fact that the camel might become lame after a fast ride and sought to return the camel to the former owner. It was interesting to listen to the presentation of their cases and to their different dialects. The Prince heard them silently. After they had finished, he addressed the Sharari:

"Bring me witnesses to testify that your camel never limped before."

To the Rweyli he said: "Bring me witnesses to testify that your camel did not go lame because of careless riding across the lava and the swamp."

Presently the Sharari brought his witnesses, but the Rweyli was unable to procure any.

"How would you judge them, Sheikh Musa?" asked the Prince.

"I would not judge them; they have judged themselves."

"By Allah, that is true!" said the Prince, leaping into the saddle of his kneeling camel and leaving without saying a word to the disputants.

SETTLEMENTS IN THE SIRHAN DEPRESSION

Toward evening the Prince told me that he was going to send the negro Hmar to the Hawran to secure reliable information about the political situation in Damascus and its vicinity. He had heard from a man of Ethra that the Government had expelled all the Rwala from Jowlan and these were now camping north and northwest of Azrak. Before Beirut twenty-three English warships were anchored, and from Constantinople forty-one regiments of the army were marching to Syria. In Damascus ninety-one dignitaries had been imprisoned, many more having escaped to the Druses for protection from the Government. These tidings were brought to the settlement of Ethra by the people of the Hawran who had come for salt. Consequently the Prince had decided to advance but slowly and await the return of Hmar. Hmar was already approaching eighty but he was so sagacious and keen-witted that the Prince could depend on him for anything. There was no means of telling when he would return, as we were not even sure whether he would succeed in reaching the station of Dherat. The Rwala were waging war both with the Ahali al-Jebel and with the Sirhan, and both of these tribes were camping near the road that led to Dherat; it was therefore quite possible that they might capture Hmar. He was to leave his camel in Dherat with

the local confidant of the Prince and proceed to Damascus by rail, deliver the letters, return with the answer by rail to Dherat, and thence upon camel to us. He could not be expected until after a journey of nine or ten days.

On Monday, June 7, we were approaching the settled oases. The depression of Sirhan penetrates far into the eastern hills. The rain water collects in such embayments and these, being protected on three sides against the attacks of the Bedouins, are very well suited for permanent settlements. From south to north could be discerned the palm gardens and blockhouses of eight oases, the foremost being Ethra and Chaf. All these settlements are called Keraya al-Meleh, Salt Settlements, because of their situation amid wide marshes and because of the fact that their inhabitants gather and trade salt.

Before noon we had the small settlement of Ghotti before us. It consists of two blockhouses surrounded by large palm gardens. Behind it the numerous palms of the settlement of Chaf came into view. Shortly afterwards we were overtaken by the settlers of Chaf. Although the Prince had summoned them, he hardly glanced at them. He responded to their greetings curtly and rode on in silence.

We encamped near several large rain pools in the ravine of Hsaydet umm Ghurabat, and proceeded to take baths —the Prince and myself first, then groups of men and children, and toward evening the women and girls (Figs. 24, 25, 26).

On Tuesday we remained in camp while the Prince settled disputes and the Arabs purchased salt and provisions.

The settlement of Chaf has over sixty dwellings which

represent three districts. The Prince nominated Awwad, the son of Hmar, as his vicegerent there. He contributes to the Prince five hundred *mejidiyyat* yearly in taxes and receives no salary from him. The inhabitants sell yearly five or six thousand camel loads of salt to Syria. One load (288 quarts) of salt is worth one *mejidiyye* (90 cents), half of which goes to the vicegerent, who in addition collects a duty, or rather a levy, for the protection of animals and loads.

I was busy all day supplementing my topographical account, except for the diversion that Jwad brought me in the shape of two numbers of an Arabic newspaper. It was the first newspaper I had read in ten months. I learned from it that the Turks had another ruler in Constantinople. Toward evening the Prince conversed with me on political topics in which he showed a considerable interest. The Turkish Government had decided to compel all the Bedouins to surrender their weapons. Accordingly the governor of Baghdad had notified all the chiefs of the Amarat and Dahamshe tribes that within a month they should give up all their rifles and revolvers; to which they replied:

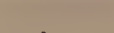
"Nuri eben Shalan is the king of northern Arabia. Should he deliver his arms we will do likewise. Should he not, neither can we, for he could then treat us like women."

This reply the governor had sent to Constantinople. The Prince did not trust the Turkish Government, not having dealt with it personally since he became prince, and he was apprehensive lest the Government deceive him and surround him with its army.

When he left me he said:

"How, brother, shall I ever be able to part with you?

We have all become so used to you! I love you—and, by Allah, I speak the truth—and now you would leave us."



TO THE CASTLE OF AMRA

Accompanied by Awde I visited, before noon, the ruins of Haditha. The Prince called after me to beware of the enemy and to return soon. We arrived at the extensive ruins. There we found a large garden enclosed by a low, crumbling wall, several small buildings, and an aqueduct to carry the water from the pond at Azrak. The whole countryside could easily be cultivated.

The heat was intense and we had failed to take along a supply of water. Awde was afraid of ghosts and kept begging me to finish my work in the ruins and gallop back to the camp.

That evening we were worried about Tuman who had left the tent at sunset and had been gone two hours. We were afraid robbers might have attacked him. The Prince sent out men to search for him. He was finally found about two hundred paces from the tent, lying in a small ditch sound asleep. He was shivering with cold when brought into the tent; the malaria, which had been troubling him for several days, had become acute.

On Sunday we entered the valley of Ghadaf, in which is the ruined castle Tubt al-Ghadaf or, as the Beni Sakhr call it, Tuba, near which the Prince Walid settled (724-743 A.D.). Beyond, the ruin of Khawrana stood forth, glittering in the sun's rays like a fabulous castle. Suddenly the apparition faded away in the clouds. The spirit that inhabited it would not brook the gaze of the sons of Adam.

Another grotesque structure rose from the eastern

threshold of the slope—the famous castle of Amra inhabited by an evil spirit, *ghola*. How melancholy it looked! (Figs. 29, 30.) Enclosed by gray, desolate slopes and half lost in mists, the castle stood as gloomy as if it were forsaken by heaven itself. No wonder the Arabs attribute such a place to none but the ghoul.

The Prince decided that we should march into the valley of Harth, leaving Azrak on the right. Upon hearing this I resolved to ride immediately to Azrak (Fig. 28). When I finally got started, in company with Awde al-Kwechbi, it was after midnight.

The ruined stronghold of Azrak is situated on the edge of a volcanic spur and of a large swamp. We arrived there after sunrise. Since we were not sure but that robbers might be lurking in the ruins we loaded our carbines and started ahead at a gallop; but no bullet greeted us and nowhere did we see fresh tracks. Feeling secure, therefore, we allowed our camels to kneel down at their leisure. Awde stayed with the camels and scrutinized carefully the region to the north and south. From the north we could have been surprised by robbers of the Ahali al-Jebel, from the south some raiding party could have attacked us. Awde urged me therefore in low and high voice to hurry through my work and depart. Owing to his growing impatience I soon mounted my camel and we headed towards the pool of Zhiyashi. The birds were so thick I shot twenty-two of them with five charges. On our return we held high feast upon them in my tent.

Shortly after noon we headed toward our camp. The heat was excessive. It seemed as if the ground were seething under my feet. It was difficult to breathe; every inhalation seemed to burn the mouth and throat.

I ascended a lava mound to verify from it the direc-

tion of Azrak and of the eighth century castle of Amra. Though it was not far I had a difficult time of it with the alternately sharp and slippery fragments of lava beneath my feet, a surveyor's plane-table upon my back, and its tripod in my hands.

Toward evening my camel knelt in front of the castle of Amra and after eight years I reëntered the familiar rooms. I yearned to copy the principal inscription, for it was possible that we might move onward, but Awde would not wait. We did not know where the Prince's camp was, but we were well aware that there were no Rwala in our rear, a fact which increased the possibility of our being attacked by robbers. We found the Prince's camp in about an hour's time.

The next day we did not migrate for the Prince was still awaiting the return of Hmar; therefore, taking along the dispirited Tuman and Naser, I went back to the castle of Amra. The neighborhood had changed very much since I first saw it. Because of scant rainfall the vicinity had become like an arid desert. Only the oldest terebinth trees remained, south of the castle. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of camels had recently drunk at the artificial pool and left their excrement in it. The dung was lying many inches deep at the edges and even in the water, which was of a dark brown color and had the putrid stench of a stagnant puddle. And yet Naser filled our canvas bucket with this water, cooked coffee for us with it, and we drank the coffee—nay, when later it became very hot, the very water itself. I could smell the stench of the dung on my hands for the next three days.

The Amra paintings had suffered great damage.[1] In the

[1] The Kuseyr Amra is probably the only extant Moslem building decorated with wall paintings which dates from as early as the eighth century

year 1901 we had had to remove the patina, clean the paintings, and wash and daub them with various chemicals. Through this process the colors had been temporarily refreshed but the particles were falling off and the pictures were vanishing. The painting opposite the one we had taken from the wall had disappeared. Intending to take that with us too, we had plastered canvas over it, cut the canvas in sections, and by rapping the plaster had tried to get the picture off the stone of the wall. Unable to separate it, however, before our escort urged us to hurry along, we had had to leave the work unfinished with the canvas still over the picture. The unusual sight of the surface plastered over with canvas puzzled the Bedouin herdsmen, who had poked off the canvas with their daggers and lances and had thus destroyed the entire painting. I should now have liked to study the Arabic and Greek inscriptions under the pictures of the individual rulers but the most important parts had crumbled and fallen. The principal inscription had suffered a good deal from the washing of 1901 and yet I wished to photograph it. But it was no easy task. The arch containing it was over three yards above the ground in a recess that had no window and, since the room itself was very dark, the inscription could not be photographed from the ground. Hence we piled stones into a heap about two yards high upon which I placed the camera and then photographed the inscription in parts. Because the letters were small and because I photographed from a distance of a yard and a half, I had to keep shifting the camera and to focus very accurately—no easy business upon a base of sliding stones.

of our era. It was discovered by the author in the course of an earlier journey. See *Kusejr 'Amra*, 2 vols., Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna, 1907.—Ed.

Alas, this laborious and even dangerous work came to nought, for not one of the twelve photographs was clear.

Tuman still complained of the weakness that had attacked him. He had no pains and his fever had subsided, but he said that his stamina was gone, his will flaccid, and his only desire was to lie and sleep.

In the afternoon a slave of the Prince came after me with the request that I come back immediately, as Hmar had returned and he wanted to consult me on matters of importance.

For some time the Druses and the miscellaneous malcontents from Damascus who had taken refuge with them had been urging Nuri to ally himself with them and attack the Turkish garrisons, but I had counseled the Prince not to act hastily and to be mindful only of the welfare of his tribe. Now the governor of Damascus had sent him a friendly message requesting that he and his tribes enter Syria and preserve order in the territory around his encampments.

DAMASCUS AT LAST

On Wednesday we went up the valley of Harth. I rode beside the Prince as usual. An hour later we were joined by a Bedouin about fifty years of age. He saluted the Prince and the latter inquired:

"How are you?"

"Allah be praised, well."

"Where do you camp?"

"At the Tell al-Adam."

"Have you not been attacked?"

"Eight camels were stolen from me."

"Did you not pursue the robbers?"

"Yes, my son pursued them."
"Has he overtaken them?"
"Yes."
"Who were they?"
"I wish I knew; likely the Hejaya."
"Why didn't your son recognize them?"
"I know not."
"Did he not tell you?"
"No."
"Have you not asked him?"
"No; I could not speak with him."
"How is that? Has he not returned?"
"No."
"And you have not searched for him, then?"
"Yes, I rode after him."
"And you found him?"
"Yes, I did."
"Have you not spoken with him?"
"No."
"Why?"
"I found his body at the rain pool, with the head shot off. The vultures and the hyenas had already visited him. I buried my son and returned."
"When did you come back?"
"Yesterday."
"What sort of pasture is there here?"
"Poor; there is no pasture at all at Rukuban. Pitch your tent here."
"And you?"
"I seek the slayers of my son."

The next day we dismounted at the ruins of the Hammam as-Sarrah, a low stone building of several chambers which was once used for baths. On all the unimpaired

walls are remains of paintings, and it is evident that all the rooms were once painted as in Amra. Indeed, the ruins resemble the latter very closely in their ground plan.

In company with Awde al-Kwechbi, I left the Hammam as-Sarrah, sped toward the ruins of the Roman camp of Hallabat and from there hastened on to Nuri. Under weigh Awde inquired whether there were any possibility of planting love in a heart unwilling to accept it. Even the elderly Awde was under the spell of a new spring of love!

"We believe, Musa, that many women of the Sleyb tribe can exercise a good or bad influence. They are said to be able not only to awaken love, but also to smother it; to strengthen and also to destroy the faculty of begetting; to increase as well as to hinder the growth of children. To lengthen and shorten life."

"Have they connections with evil spirits?"

"No one knows that, but we are inclined to believe so. Such women are called witches although none may be directly so-called. Should that be proved of any Slubiyye, we should certainly kill her."

On Friday we arrived at the railroad track. Prince Nuri eben Shalan had entered the territory of the settlers. The camp was no sooner pitched upon the fields of the Nasib settlement than it was visited by the elders of the various adjacent villages who came to pay fealty to the Prince and to invite him to dine with them. In the afternoon streams of camels, donkeys, and asses kept arriving laden with gifts of wheat, barley, and flour for the Prince and the other chiefs. It was the tribute by means of which the settlers purchased protection and safety from the Arabs.

The Prince sat by me until late in the night talking about our imminent parting. We had become true friends; he had often declared openly that I was dearer to him than his first-born son, Nawwaf.

On Saturday, June 19, with all my companions and camels, I left the camp of the Prince and marched to Damascus, where I arrived in the afternoon of Monday, June 21, 1909.

FIG. 31

Our retinue

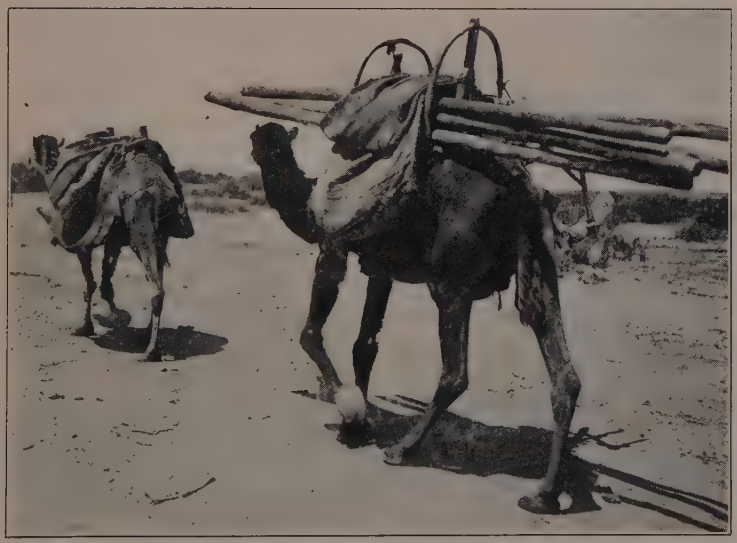


FIG. 32

Pack camels carrying camelskin water bags and tent poles

PART TWO

✧ ✧

NOVEMBER 1914–JANUARY 1915

X. WITH THE WELD ALI TRIBE

ONCE MORE ON THE BORDERS OF THE DESERT

In the middle of November, 1914, I arrived at Damascus and was visited there by Prince Nuri who begged me to vouch for him and secure him a permit to leave with his tribe for the inner desert. I readily promised to intervene on his behalf and asked him to lend me his countenance during my new sojourn in the desert.

"You know, Musa, that I like you as my own brother. You give me your countenance before the Government, I give it to you before the Bedouins, and Allah will grant it to us both before all the sons of Adam. When will you come to my camp?"

"If it is the will of Allah, within a fortnight I shall pitch my tent beside yours."

"I don't know, brother, whether I shall be able to wait so long after the Government releases me from the cage at Dmeyr. All my clans and the tribes acting on my advice are camping in the desert and need me; my slaves are eager to get off from the mud of Dmeyr to the clean stone or sandy desert. I shall do my utmost to await your arrival. Should I depart sooner, you will catch up with me."

After having pledged myself for Nuri I obtained the permit for him to depart into the inner desert. When I informed him of it he rejoiced and embraced me. Immediately he left Damascus for fear the Government might change its mind. He removed his camp one day's march

to the southeast of Dmeyr and notified me that he would wait for me there if I would hurry. I was, however, unable to leave Damascus as quickly as I wished to; I had first to finish my preparations, and it rained heavily for several days.

Eventually we were on the march. I was accompanied by a European, whom we called Khalaf, and three natives: my old, tried Naser with his stupid brother Mansur, and Hseynawi. We rode camels and camels also carried our supplies and tents. All my baggage was transferred in a wagon to the sanctuary of Sheikh Ruslan by way of Bab Tuma and there loaded upon camels. We proceeded by the highway leading to Homs. As the camels took fright at every wagon, pressed themselves against the walls of the gardens, and frequently slipped upon the muddy ground, we did not get ahead very fast. In the gardens we went among olive trees the fruit of which was being picked, or rather, together with many of the branches, was being mercilessly beaten down by poles.

In the afternoon we passed by the side road that leads north to the town of Duma, the residence of a *kaymakam*, or political governor. In Duma the houses are picturesquely set in large gardens about the base of the mountain range of Kalamun.

The main highway we were traversing had been recently repaired and provided with milestones. We forsook it after two o'clock and proceeded eastward to the farm of Daud an-Nebki. He had bought most of the marshy meadows in the vicinity of Adhra. These he had drained and prepared for cotton culture. They were being tilled by tenants whom he had provided with efficient European implements and who received half of the net profits. South of the farm he had planted a section of

the grounds with fruit trees, which thrive well. Several residents of Adhra who had guided themselves by his example also had fields that were yielding them a generous profit. The old marshes had disappeared and fertile fields were penetrating farther and farther to the south and east. Everywhere in the village and around it we saw old foundation walls, hewn bowlders, and fragments of pillars and capitals—evidence of an Adhra that used to be much larger and more imposing. The present village of Adhra numbered about one hundred and twenty huts, inside of which were to be found more fragments of pillars and their capitals.

The residents wreck the old structures and sell the building stone thus procured in and about Damascus.

North of Adhra rises the bare, rocky Kalamun range. To the east, upon the southern spur of the range, is the settlement of Dmeyr. A white fort, once an old pagan temple, dominates the town. South of Dmeyr there is a narrow passage connecting the fertile fields of Damascus with the wastes of Arabia and this is the most convenient gate for the migrating Bedouins. Several extinct volcanoes are to be seen from here.

In the morning we followed the road that led east through the fields. Right and left of us were puddles of water. The sky was overcast with heavy clouds and the air laden with dense vapors that obscured the view. Crossing a hollow, we scared nine wild swine.

The nearer we drew to Dmeyr, the better was the cultivation of the lowland; the higher fields too were being plowed.

Before noon we encamped near wrecked barracks. They were built in the late seventies of the last century by order of the governor, Midhat Pasha. Vast gardens had

also been irrigated here at his orders. Now the barracks are deserted, and the gardens laid bare.

Prior to 1912 there had been considerable fighting against the government and pillaging, but in 1912 Kasem eben Nuer, formerly a chief of robbers, was won over with various gifts and was appointed commander of the frontier guard on the eastern boundary of the Damascan lands at a salary of 250 piasters ($11.75) per month. But it irritated him that the gendarmes stationed in Dmeyr received more money than he did.

Kasem was not at home; he had been in Damascus for several days. His brother Ghazban told me that Prince Nuri had left Dmeyr ten days before, going in a southerly direction. I should have preferred to follow him immediately by forced marches but I needed a protector who would be esteemed by all the clans of the Ahali al-Jebel.

While I was seeking such a man a gendarme sergeant came from Dmeyr with the Turkish political official and several neighbors, and offered me five mounted gendarmes who would escort me to the main body of the Ghiyat camping in the valley of Sham. Thence, they believed, I could proceed after Prince Nuri under his protection. I declined this offer knowing very well that the gendarmes would leave me with the Ghiyat and that the latter would jump upon me as upon prey sent by Allah. The escort by gendarmes and my sojourn in the valley of Sham would have drawn to me the attention of all the robber bands and only a miracle could have led to my escape from the volcanic region. The sergeant flouted my objections and appealed to the attestation of the official and the neighbors from Dmeyr that the Ghiyat would fulfill every wish of mine; he assured me that the gendarmes would not leave the camp of the Ghiyat until

the chief returned with my letter announcing that I had reached Nuri safely.

Finally, intending to test the offer of the sergeant, I consented to ride with the gendarmes to the Ghiyat and gave him money to purchase forage for the horses and food for the men. A member of the Ghiyat was to accompany us and carry the forage and provisions upon his camel. The sergeant departed to make the arrangements but in an hour he returned with the news that the gendarmes had refused to comply and that none of them were willing to ride to the Ghiyat. He advised me to wait until he could get to Duma or to Damascus, bring new orders, and enforce the obedience of the gendarmes. Being familiar with this game of the frontier guards I thanked the sergeant for the proffered protection and declared that I would protect myself. The gendarme came again at midnight with another offer, or order as he called it, but I would not even listen to him and told him to return instantly because it was going to rain.

Reconsidering the situation, I decided to go east to the Weld Ali of the Aneze, who were camping with the chiefs Sultan and Saud, and thence on to Prince Nuri. I was to be accompanied by Ghazban eben Nuer and his two fellow tribesmen. With these our party counted eight well-armed men able to fight a band of even twenty robbers, whose firearms and ammunition are usually poor.

We had more rain but before midnight the sky cleared and I hoped to start soon, as I did not place much trust in the sergeant from Dmeyr and feared that the district governor himself might come from Duma to bother me with new proposals.

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A STRANGE WELCOME

We proceeded eastward in the morning of December 6, 1914, over very boggy ground, and when at noon we sighted Sultan's huge camp some distance beyond the ancient Roman fortress Khan at-Trab, we sent one of our comrades ahead to notify the young chief of our arrival. At sunset three riders appeared and a little later two more, all coming toward us at a gallop. In another moment small groups of riders had emerged upon several of the eastern heights. Knowing not whether they were friends or foes, we seized our weapons and awaited the first shot. The riders were waving their arms but they kept silent. The first three approached to within three hundred yards without either firing or calling out. As we were surrounded on all sides we could not fight. Then the first three riders rode up to us and the first one, a swarthy youth of about twenty years, jumped off his brown mare, thrust his hand out to me, and cried:

"Welcome among us, Musa."

I recognized in him the chief Sultan âl Tayyar, my young friend whom I had not seen since the year 1908. We were overjoyed at so unexpected a meeting. The other riders reached us in groups, expressing amazement that they had met a friend when they had ridden out to meet an enemy. Many were not satisfied and a small man holding a long spear swore like a trooper when he realized that he could not partake of the things loaded upon my camels. Sultan then explained to me the reason why his men gave me so strange a welcome.

"When I learned of your coming I feared that you might fall into the hands of robbers, who had been circling about the camp in quest of booty. I wanted to ride out to meet you but I had in my tent only two slaves,

the rest of the men being engaged in rounding up the returning flocks. I did not hesitate long, however, but, firing three shots from my revolver, shouted in alarm, 'O riders!' and waved my rifle toward the northwest as I darted from the camp in that direction. My alarm cry was repeated by all who heard it; everybody turned to the northwest and soon groups of riders hastened after me to rout the supposed enemy."

Thus we were joined by about fifty riders who laughed heartily when they learned of the clever manner in which Sultan had summoned them. They all accompanied me to the camp.

I had my tents pitched beside the tent of Sultan. He ordered a fat wether to be slaughtered for supper and I sat in his tent until almost midnight. He assured me that he would march southward as quickly as possible in order that I might join Prince Nuri the sooner. His grandfather on his mother's side, Saud eben Melhem, would do likewise, he said, since the latter had received an order a week ago from General Zeki to hasten to Prince Nuri. There were many clans of the Fware tribe with the Weld Ali, all of them fleeing with their herds from the neighborhood of Damascus and Homs to save them from the greed of the Turkish Government. They did not take any interest in the European War. They discussed the fighting of the Turkish Government with the English on the Egyptian boundary, at Kweyt, and at Basra, of which they had learned in Homs, as they would discuss a fight between two strange tribes which did not concern them. Many wished for the defeat of the Turkish Government, while others feared that in that event the English would occupy the cultivated regions with guards so strong that it would be impossible to steal anything from the settlers.

The next day Saud eben Melhem, the head chief of the Hsene, a division of the Weld Ali, came with his sons Fendi, Turki, and Muhammad, to pay homage to me and to show me the order of Zeki Pasha instructing him to join Prince Nuri immediately. He said that he was determined to sacrifice himself, his children, and his tribe at the behest of the Turkish Government and the Sultan in Constantinople, to whom Allah would certainly grant victory. Upon being told that I had brought new directions, he admonished those present to listen respectfully to the words of the supreme Government which my servant Mansur was to read. The large tent of Sultan was filled with visitors, and in front and back of it a curious crowd was also pressing, eager to hear the desires of the Government and news of what had occurred after their departure from the cultivated region. When Mansur had finished, many shouted: "Allah grant victory to the Government and the Sultan!" but the majority remained silent. Several minutes later all kinds of topics were discussed, but there was no further mention of the Government or the war.

We had barely begun our meal when an alarm cry to the north was heard. The younger men threw off their coats, seized their arms, leaped upon mares that stood ready, and darted forth, singing:

> "They cry alarm and the horses are shying,
> And, as we rode out, we saw nothing.
> Our custom is to strike down armed men
> To please thee, our little gazelle,
> Who smilest so prettily."

It was a false alarm.

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POLITICS

After dinner I invited Sultan and Saud with his sons to my tent, wishing to discuss political events and the war with them. Saud eben Melhem was about sixty-five years old. Rather small of stature, plump, with a large, curled lower lip and small, shifty eyes, he resembled a calm settler more than a wandering son of the desert. He owned a house in Homs and two villages. His wife, who hailed from Jerud and was a good cook, preferred living at Homs; this was also Saud's favorite residence because there he could procure all manner of delicacies. He had not entered the inner desert since he was a young man. During the rainy season he lived in his stone house at Homs or in huts at one of his villages, while in the dry season he tented in the open between Homs and those villages. After the outbreak of the war he betook himself to the inner desert, not for the purpose of serving the Government but to protect his property from avaricious officials.

"You know, Musa," he said, "that I cannot take my house or villages into the inner desert, hence I must proceed cautiously. In the settled territory as well as here in the desert there are many spying for the Government. You know the Government. It takes everything but gives nothing. I do not want it to confiscate all I have among the settlers, so often I must speak otherwise than I think. That is diplomacy. I am troubled with gout and cannot ride; yet I have forsaken my house and taken to the inner desert. They have levied a war tax upon us and leased it to all kinds of collectors. Whoever pays it will be ruined and whoever does not pay it and yet remains in the tilled region will likewise be ruined. They take away

from my husbandmen pack camels, donkeys, flocks of goats and sheep, and they have emptied my grain barns. In order to save some of my property for the past month I have been sending my camels, goats, and sheep into the desert while I myself have waited only until I could get assurance from Zeki Pasha that my house would not be confiscated. He ordered me to join Nuri. I want to go to him, but the gout torments me."

To my question as to whether he would stand by the Government or would plunder the settlements from the fastnesses of the inner desert, he answered evasively that it lay with Nuri to decide. He begged me to write to the Fedan and Sbaa tribes and exhort them to make peace with the Weld Ali, adding:

"As long as those of my own affiliation press upon me, I cannot care for strangers."

In the morning of Tuesday, December 8, the camp was moved southeast. I rode with Sultan through an undulating region. Sultan was rather small of stature, broad-shouldered, with large thick lips, black, sincere eyes, and so swarthy a complexion that I could not help surmising that his blood was infused with the blood of some negro. His brother, Muhammad, had been sent by the Government to a school established in Constantinople by Abdul-Hamid for the sons of chiefs. He returned in the year 1901, at the time when his father was killed by the Druses, but died shortly after his return.

Of the reigning family of Tayyar only Sultan remained, at that time six years old. He was left to the care of the old slave Khalaf who camped with him for three years at Adhra. When twelve years old he was married by Khalaf to Kutna and two years later to Rafa who was older than he and who bore him two girls. He di-

vorced Kutna, but he loved Rafa dearly, never engaging in any undertaking without consulting her. His only regret was that she had heretofore failed to bear him a son. Very little of his father's large property was left to Sultan. He was being paid by the Government 280 Turkish pounds ($1260) yearly for the protection of pilgrims, but he had to pay yearly 320 pounds ($1440) in taxes. His family is much respected throughout the desert as the principal and most bountiful of all the families of the Ayde subdivision of the Weld Ali. The fireplace in the men's compartment of his tent was always made large and round and upon old camp sites its traces could be seen even after many years.

The members of the Ayde are not true Bedouins, but goat and sheep raisers. Far and wide in the land I saw flocks of goats and sheep.

The next day we did not advance because Saud eben Melhem desired to extend to me his full hospitality. In the forenoon I made an excursion to a hill near by where I wished to jot down accurately the individual craters of the volcanic region of Iyath.

At noon I was visited by Mishkhas, the daughter of the assassinated Prince Fahad eben Shalan. She was the first wife of the Emir Nawwaf, to whom she had borne a son Sultan and who still loved her dearly and longed for her. After the assassination of her father, Fahad, she fled from Nawwaf and later had married Fendi, the son of Saud eben Melhem. She begged me to carry her regards to her son Sultan and to Nawwaf. She would gladly have returned to them but disliked Nuri, upon whose hands she saw her father's blood.

In the afternoon Sultan came to conduct me to the tent of Saud. About a hundred persons were gathered

there in a rectangular group and at my entrance all arose. I was assigned a place of honor at the wall separating the space for men from that for women. Muhammad, the son of Saud, came to meet me, conducted me to the seat of honor, and seated himself in the center of the long western side of the tent. After the customary greetings a slave poured several drops of water on the fingers of my right hand, and six negroes brought in a huge platter heaped with mutton and peeled wheat, which they set down in the middle of the rectangle.

Muhammad invited me and five other men to eat. On my right was squatting Sultan and on my left Turki, the son of Saud; and both selected the choicest pieces of meat to lay before me. Behind every one of us stood a negro with a dish of water. We had not eaten more than four minutes when we arose and resumed our former places and Muhammad invited ten other guests to partake. After these the feast was for fifteen persons, then for eighteen, and finally for twenty. Not until these had finished did Muhammad himself take his seat with three small children by the platter to pick at the bones. The meat was gone but enough of the peeled wheat was left for a satisfying meal. Upon his command the negroes carried away the platter with the bones and what was left of the peeled wheat to the women, regardless of those present who had had no taste whatever of the meal. The aged chief Saud was in a corner picking at a wether's head.

After the feast there was unrestrained conversation. The war, as usual, was scarcely mentioned. We talked about the grazing lands, the need of an abundant rain, the maladies of the goats and sheep, thieving in the camp, and the threatened raid of the Fedan. None but Saud,

tormented by gout, bestowed a thought upon the Government or the British. He expressed a wish for an early termination of the war in order that he might return to his home in Homs.

FOXES AND FABLES

On Thursday we migrated into the wide depression of Dhenaba. On the way we frightened out several foxes.

"The fox is found all over the desert," I was told. "If we see its spoor in the morning in the dew, we set a greyhound on to it. The flesh of the captured fox is very tasty. The fox has a great grudge against human beings and accuses us of ingratitude.

"Adam, the first father of all human sons, once found a half-frozen serpent outside the garden of Eden. Being moved by compassion, he laid the serpent in his bosom and returned with it into his garden. The serpent became warm, recovered, and shouted to Adam:

" 'Carry me back at once to the spot whence thou didst take me; I have my family there. If thou dost not carry me back there at once, I will bite thee.' Adam could not remember exactly the spot. He walked to and fro with the serpent who kept shouting: 'This is not where my family lives. Carry me back there at once, or I will bite thee.'

"Adam, wearied and terrified, was glad to meet a fox, and proposed to the serpent that the fox should act as judge. The serpent agreed. Adam sat down in front of the fox and was about to explain what the point at issue was, but the fox interrupted him with the words:

" 'Be silent, until thy adversary comes.'

" 'My adversary is here.'

" 'I do not see him.'

" 'I am here. I am lying right on Adam's belly.'

" 'If thou art Adam's opponent, thou must sit opposite him, otherwise I cannot acknowledge thee as such.'

" 'Very well, then I will crawl out.'

"The serpent crawled out from beneath Adam's garment and sat down in front of him. The fox said:

" 'Thee, O man (Adam), I will call Neysube, therefore pay heed that thou mayest comprehend everything. Behold the serpent's head, O Neysub beh!' "

"But the words 'O Neysub beh' mean: 'Oh! a blow upon it.' Adam understood the meaning of the fox's challenge, seized his cudgel, which was provided with a heavy knob, and smashed the serpent's head. Since then the sons of Adam have slain every serpent at sight. But when they began to pursue the descendants of the fox also and to eat their flesh, the latter complained: 'Shame unto thee, thou black-headed one! Why am I being pursued? Is it thus that I am requited for my good deed?'

"The fox declares that he wishes to live at peace with everyone, but in reality he wishes to beguile everyone. Thus he sent a message once to the raven:

" 'Gladly would I entertain thee.'

" 'Good! entertain me.'

"The fox boiled some gruel made of milk and flour, poured it out on a shallow rock, and invited the raven. The raven came and the fox urged him, saying:

" 'Enjoy thyself, comrade!' and at once began to lap the fluid from the surface of the rock, while the hungry raven was unable to get anything into his beak. He thought to himself: 'Very well, then; that is the fox's hospitality.' But he did not show his dissatisfaction and invited the

Fig. 33
The Emir Nawwaf

fox to visit him for sweet dates. The fox's mouth watered. He was very fond of sweet dates, but he could never pluck them; they hung too high, and it was only because of them that he had wished to make friends with the raven. The raven shook the finest and ripest dates into a dense shrub containing long and sharp thorns, and then he said to the fox:

"'Enjoy thyself, comrade.' The fox ran round the shrub trying to snatch out at least a single date with his tongue or his foot, but in vain. The thorns wounded his legs. Enviously he watched the raven, who with his claws drew forth date after date and picked them up with his beak. Since that time the fox has acknowledged the raven as his equal.

"The fox is very fond of feeding on grains of wheat. He therefore invited the hedgehog to till a field in common with him and to sow wheat. The hedgehog readily agreed and with his family—he had twenty-four children—he set about the work. They eagerly plowed the soil, sowed the wheat, and protected it against trespassers. From time to time the fox came running up to look at them, but he did not help them. He promised that he would reap, thrash, and winnow the wheat. But this work he also left to the hedgehog. When the wheat was finally thrashed and winnowed the fox suggested to the hedgehog:

"'Thou and I will run a race. Whichever of us runs first from my den to the pile of wheat, shall take it all. We are friends. Why should we divide it?'

"The hedgehog agreed.

"The race was to begin at sunrise. In the night the hedgehog brought his wife and his twenty-four children to the pile of grain, placed his wife up against it, and pro-

ceeded straight to the fox's den, posting his children at fixed intervals, so that he reached the den alone.

"'O father fox, the sun is rising. Wilt thou not run?'

"'Run thyself. I will catch up with thee.'

"'Good, I will run.'

"When it grew warmer and the dew had dried up, the fox jumped up from his lair and shouted:

"'Where art thou, hedgehog?'

"'Near thy jawbone,' and actually he perceived the hedgehog in front of him. He went a short distance farther and asked afresh:

"'Where art thou, hedgehog?'

"'Here, in front of thy face.'

"The fox was surprised at seeing the hedgehog in front of him. He set off at a trot. The hedgehog was still in front of him. He ran leaping on. The hedgehog was still in front of him. The sweat was pouring off him when he drew near to the pile of wheat, but the hedgehog was sitting on it. Thus the hedgehog gained a victory over the fox.

"The foxes wanted to make friends with the dogs. After conferring together, they wrote a long letter in which they described their love and devotion as well as their longing for peace, and sent a young fox to hand the letter to the chief of the dogs. Scarcely had the fox reached the frontier of the territory belonging to the dogs when he was observed by the guard, and five dogs set upon him. The fox shouted that he had come to negotiate for peace and showed the letter, but the dogs would not believe him. He threw the letter to them in order that they might read it but the dogs continued to snarl angrily and rush after him, without taking any notice of the white paper. The fox was glad to escape with his life.

Bleeding from many wounds and all covered with sweat, he reached his companions. When he had recovered, the foxes asked:

"'What about the letter?'

"'They would not believe it.'

"'What? they would not believe it? Why, we stamped it with our seal.'

"'Then the dogs do not trouble about your seal. I showed the letter to five of them. Not a single one could read or write, but they could all snarl and bite, as you see from me.'

"The fox is the only creature to whom Allah sends prey no matter whether it is awake or asleep or buried in the ground. Once upon a time the foxes wanted to find out whether Allah would send them something to eat if they buried themselves. So they selected one of their number for the trial and dug a small grave in the yellow clay; one of them lay down in it and the others covered him up. Only the whiskers of the buried fox protruded above the ground. Then the other foxes ran away and waited at a distance to see what would happen. And behold! A hare came out in search of food. He saw the protruding whiskers of the buried fox and, thinking they were dry stalks of grass, came nearer and nearer and began to sniff at the whiskers and pull them. At that the buried fox stirred and bit the poor hare to death."

SULTAN AND HIS NEGROES

THE next day there came along with others a weak girl about twelve years old and her mother and aunt. She was Fazza, the daughter of Hubeyli of the Sirhan clan. She

was suffering from a neglected cold that had developed into a fever. She had barely gone when Sultan inquired as to the state of her health and explained that he had married her ten days before. I advised him to leave the girl for at least five years with her relatives and to be satisfied with his wife Rafa who was fully developed and hence fit to bear him a much stronger boy than the fragile Fazza could. He spoke of Rafa as a woman beneath his foot.

Sultan did not concern himself with the rearing of his two little daughters who were cared for by slaves and taught the most vulgar and abusive words. I heard a slave teaching one of them to call her father and mother foul names. When the child repeated them, her father and the slaves present were convulsed with laughter.

The standard of morality among the Ayde and Hsene clans seems far from high. Never among the Rwala did I hear the implications of unrestrained lechery which were frequent among these people, nor the jests about intimacies of young men with slave women, or even of young slaves with high-bred daughters. From such intimacies, perhaps, come the negro characteristics of many high-bred sons.

With Saud and even more with Sultan the slaves presume to a great degree of power, doing what they please and caring not for their masters, or "uncles" as they call them. They did not venture within my tent, but they were always hanging about my servants, demanding one thing or another for themselves and their "uncles." Sultan himself was greedy for many things he saw. He did not ask me himself but prevailed upon my servant Hseynawi to solicit this or that for him. Hseynawi promised him everything while advising me to give him nothing, and then he would complain to Sultan that I was a miser who was unwilling to give a single gift.

Every day Hseynawi was causing me greater trouble by stirring up the slaves against me and complaining of my alleged severity. I had been warned against him and my other servant, Naser, assured me that he would watch closely so that Hseynawi could not steal from me. He had been very obliging in Damascus and Dmeyr, but as soon as we came to the Ayde he grew unruly and began to proclaim himself as my guide and protector, asserting that it was only his love for me that had led him to forsake Chaf with his palace there and the stupendous wealth which it would have been possible for him to amass there in no time. He stated that for six days he had guided the English traveler, Miss Gertrude Lowthian Bell, from Azrak, receiving from her six English sovereigns and a ten-shot pistol. He enjoyed imitating the manner of speech of the Englishwoman despite my prohibition of such caricaturing. I regretted taking him along and would gladly have rid myself of him; but that was an impossibility as nobody wanted to shelter him.

One day I heard a young woman who was sitting in her litter singing in an agreeable voice:

"O bird of prey, who circles ever above us!
A greeting, if swiftly to Tarhume you will fly.
Her darling has shaken the enemy!
You will hear news of him to make you wonder.
But his comrades fled! May so many reproaches cover them,
That the plain be leveled to the hillside."

NOT PATRIOTISM BUT BOOTY

The deeper we penetrated into the heart of the desert, the more Saud and Sultan feared an attack by the Fedan and Sbaa tribes. I had persuaded Prince Nuri as early as

1909 to offer peace to the Fedan and their allies, the Ebede. I had also been negotiating with the head chiefs of the Fedan and Ebede to effect a peace between the Zana Muslim and the Zana Bishr; but after the Government had treacherously captured Prince Nuri in 1910, and the Rwala had attacked the Turkish garrisons and pillaged the frontier settlements, the Government again stirred the Fedan and the Ebede against them. I had remonstrated with the Governor for these tactics in 1912, when I succeeded in liberating Prince Nuri from jail, and had asked him to renew the peace; but the Rwala resented the treachery of the Fedan tribe and were attacking them whenever they could. In vain the Government proposed peace to the chiefs of the warring tribes. The Fedan, who were provided with arms by the officials, were revengeful, sparing not even the lives of children.

In November 1914 Zeki Pasha and the governor of Damascus asked me to induce the Fedan to make peace or at least an eight months' armistice, for they estimated that the war would be ended within eight months. At that time I wrote to my friend Barjas eben Hdeyb, chief of the Ebede, to use his influence with the Fedan in the interests of peace, but I failed to receive an answer. Hence I repeated my persuasion from Sultan's camp and promised to do the same from the camp of Nuri.

A civil war was raging among the members of the Kmusa tribe. My good friend, the head chief Ghathwan eben Mershed, had for years been living at peace with the surrounding Aneze tribes, but his brother Bishir, who in 1910 had married a certain eccentric European, had defied him and was pillaging camps of the Arabs as well as villages of the settlers. Arbitration with Bishir and his adherents, for whom the Sbaa had no respect, was out of

the question: they must be subdued by sheer force. Therefore I parleyed with Saud and Sultan, proposing that together with Nuri they assail him, an expedition in which all of them displayed more interest than in the Turkish Government and England. They saw in the Government merely a bureaucracy of tormentors who were of no benefit to the Arabs in general or the Bedouins in particular but, on the contrary, injured their interests whenever possible. They did not know much about Islam, and Islam had no ties by which to link them with the Government. Had the Turkish Government guaranteed them a large booty from the war, they would have risen against the British; on the other hand, if the British had promised them that they would be permitted to loot the settlements subject to the Turkish rule, they would have risen against the Turks. It is only the desire for booty that inspires the inhabitants of the desert to great deeds; they have no conception of love for one's country or one's religion. They could not expect that the Turkish Government would let them pillage without restraint, especially since the Government had exploited them from the very beginning. Universal peace in the inner desert was their goal only in order that they might fall upon those settlements that were left without any protection, regardless as to whether such settlements were under Turkish or British rule. This was the motive which prompted them to ask me to effect a peace with the Sbaa and the Fedan.

Monday, December 14, we remained on our camp site, west of the Khabari al-Bweyb. Saud was tormented by gout and decreed that we were not to move until his pains abated.

XI. BACK TO THE INNER DESERT WITHOUT GUIDE OR PROTECTOR

OLD CAMP SITES

We had no news of Nuri. I wanted to seek him myself, but Sultan resented such a suggestion and persuaded me to patience.

"The Shaitan [Satan], Musa," he said, "presses men to impetuous action, whereas a deliberate decision is the gift of the Most Merciful."

We finished our preparations for leaving our friends, and came to an understanding with several men who wanted to join us so as to get back more conveniently to their relatives who had preceded them into the inner desert.

On Thursday, December 17, we loaded our tents and supplies and departed from Sultan's camp. For over an hour Sultan, with a single slave, accompanied us. After a time eight other men caught up, one on a mare, the others on camels, and went along with us.

To the left upon a small hillock we sighted four large eagles who were watching our approach with curiosity—a good omen, according to Sultan. He parted with me with tears in his eyes and earnestly declared that he would remain my true friend forever.

At noon we passed through an abandoned camp site which my companions scrutinized closely. At such places the nature of the tracks and excrement indicates whether there has been a camp of Bedouins or of the breeders of

goats and sheep, and when it was abandoned. The size of the space where the camels rested through the night and the tracks of horses mark the place where the chief himself camped, and the size and form of the fireplace tell his name and dignity. As soon as the visitors at such an abandoned camp site have decided on the chief's name they know also who camped with him and then they seek the tents of individual families. Being familiar with the approximate number of camels owned by the individual tenants, they inspect the particular spots for the camels, look for stones upon which the women put their kettles and which each fastens in the ground in her own peculiar fashion, measure the dimensions of the compartment reserved for men, observe the depth of the fireplace in which coffee is cooked, and thus distinguish the owner. Then come reminiscences of the tenants, of the rendezvous and raids. It takes a long time to exhaust all the material for talk which such an abandoned camp furnishes.

We were traversing a land of plenty where camels would find pasture for the entire ensuing year.

Going in a southeasterly direction in the undulating plain we came upon a large camp site that had been abandoned but recently and within its area saw the site of a large tent containing numerous hoofprints of horses. Here one of my escorts suddenly picked up a piece of ostrich feather like those with which the Rwala embellish their emblem, the Abu-d-Dhur. This led us to surmise with a fair degree of certainty that the place had been camped upon by Prince Nuri, in whose tent the Abu-d-Dhur is kept. We could not determine his route, however; for although the entire region was a maze of tracks these were almost obscured by the recent rains. As the only footprints

of camels pointed toward the south, we agreed upon seeking the Prince to the southward.

The men who had joined us departed to seek their relatives, leaving only Awad behind, a youth of the Freje clan, who had traversed almost two-thirds of Arabia in his twenty years.

RAIN IN THE DESERT

In the afternoon we encamped near a small hill in a deep dry watercourse. Southwest of us stood the mesa of Kharja. East and west of us glimmered rain pools; plenty of pasturage and an abundance of dry perennials lay about us; our camp fire was concealed under a steep, high bank; our baggage was hidden among bowlders in the channel, in the soft sands of which we made our beds. It was a camp such as the traveler seldom finds in the desert. But woe to us if a heavy rain should fall in the east! Our channel would be filled with a rushing torrent. Everything would be swept away that could not quickly be rescued. As a matter of fact it did rain hard, and we had quite a time of it saving the baggage, and were soaked up to the knees before we finished.

"Do you know, Musa, the negro Gharraf, who served the head chief Sattam, may Allah have mercy on him?"

"I do know him, Awad."

"Did you notice his cut fingers and the countless scars on his hands and legs and body?"

"I saw them. Why do you ask?"

"When the Fedan fought in this territory to avenge the death of their head chief, Turki, they marked him thus. Two years after Turki's death they made a fresh raid against the Rwala. Allah led them to a camp of the Shalan

kin. There was an heroic battle as the Shalan kin, though enormously outnumbered by the Fedan, resisted. The Shalan urged each other to success thus:

"'Let us attack them, come what Allah wills; either these men will shoot us all and then take not only our herds but our horses too, or we shall free our herds.'

"Afterwards the Shalan, returning for their missing comrades, found Gharraf, the slave of Sattam, pinned beneath his horse. Gharraf, because of his generosity and bravery, was no less esteemed by the Rwala than if he were a chief himself. The Fedan, to whom Gharraf was known, had stabbed at him as he lay under his horse unable to defend himself, slashed him with their sabers and left him for dead. But the Rwala found life in him yet, placed him on a camel, and brought him to his tent. Nearly all the fingers on his hands and the toes of his feet had been cut off and there was hardly a spot on his whole body where he had not been either stabbed or slashed. It took him three years to recover, but at last with the help of Allah he could ride as before."

It continued to rain all day.

CAMELS SEEN TO THE SOUTH

In the morning the sun appeared and we rode on to the rolling, stone-covered plain of Dmeythat. In the depressions *sharan*,[1] *ruthe*, and *shih* (a kind of wormwood) flourish.

"Camels munch *sharan*, *ruthe* and *shih* with relish, but they do not fatten on them, because of the laxative action of the plants. That is why we never remain long on

[1] *Suaeda*, Forsk.; shrub with prickly leaves and small greenish flowers.

Dmeythat," said Awad. "The best pasturage in the rainy season our camels find in the vicinity of the lowland of Khor and the mesa of Laha. If you ask a Rweyli: 'Where have you grazed this winter?' you are likely to receive the answer: 'Our winter pasturage was Khor.' In the spring we prefer grazing in the neighborhood of Jowf and on the northern edges of the Nefud. In the country round the volcano of Amud you may find our herds at the beginning of summer, while in the midst of summer we pasture south of Damascus. In the autumn many of our clans await rain in the depression of Sirhan. If it does not rain in the Hamad and in the Wudiyan, they migrate to the vicinity of Teyma or to the eastern boundary of the Nefud, where rains are more regular."

From our isolated camp that night I detected through my binoculars a row of grazing camels on a crest. It occurred to me that they might belong to a band of resting raiders but, upon scrutinizing the individual animals more closely, I did not observe saddles on any of them, a certain proof that it was a herd returning home after grazing during the day. I called for Awad but before he could climb the mound where I was, a dark cloud obscured the sun and he could see nothing. We were watchful during the night, but nobody approached us.

On Wednesday, December 23, we left our encampment and trudged in a southwesterly direction, as Awad was of the opinion that the camels I had seen were in a camp somewhere there. The fog was so heavy we had to hasten forward compass in hand. When the fog lifted we eagerly looked for traces of smoke but in vain.

Shortly before noon we spied to the northwest two camel riders and one man afoot. As we had not detected any herds of camels, my companions maintained that those

I had seen yesterday were a band of raiders and that these three men were spies. In vain I argued that none of the animals had saddles, that there were young camels among them, and that they were at least eighteen miles distant; I could not convince my companions, who were intimidated by the constant lamentations of Hseynawi. We hid our camels in a shallow gully, crawled forward, and lay in the path of the unknown men. When they were within about one hundred paces of us, Awad called to them:

"Continue on your way if you are of the Zana Muslim, but flee, if you are enemies."

Hseynawi leaped up and began to imitate the motions of horseback riders who trot about their chief as a manifestation of their pledges of loyalty. The same thing is done in the desert by camel or horseback riders when they want to assure a band that they encounter that they have no hostile motives. But the unknown riders did not trust the words of Awad nor the motions of Hseynawi. They swerved their mounts, the one afoot leaping behind one of the riders, and galloped away toward the northeast. Hseynawi ran after them, shouting and waving the tail of his mantle, but all in vain: they shortly disappeared in the hills. Their panicky flight and the bulging bags upon their saddles proved conclusively that they were peaceful travelers. Hoping they would summon to their assistance Arabs who might be camping in the vicinity, we waited; but no rider appeared. Finally we encamped near a large artificial rain pool to the southeast.

There is not a single spring in the plains of the Hamad and there are almost no wells of spring water. The Arabs draw their water from natural basins or depressions in which rain water gathers and forms larger or smaller pools. Where there are no such natural pools, many artifi-

cial reservoirs are to be seen, frequently measuring thousands of square yards in area and as many as ten feet deep. The excavated clay forms wide banks in which are left large openings through which rain water flows into the pools. The chiefs who directed these gigantic feats of engineering displayed great ingenuity in thus securing for their herds the water which was so indispensable to them in these regions. By camping here they saved the pasturage adjoining the natural waters for the times when the water in the artificial pools evaporated. Many thousands of diligent hands were necessary to excavate these basins. I am inclined to believe that the work was not done by the Bedouins, or camel raisers, but by the breeders of goats and sheep. Perhaps they were helped by the inhabitants of the settlements south of Damascus, who drove their herds in late autumn to the eastern desert in order to save their crops. They could find pasture in the desert from the first rains in November until May, provided they could supply themselves with the water necessary for their sheep and goats; possibly they excavated the artificial rain pools for this purpose. At the end of May or the beginning of June, when the last of the water had evaporated, they would return to their settlements where meantime the harvesting had begun, and their herds could graze in the stubble fields. The same method could—nay, ought to—be employed even now by a powerful government which has the welfare of the settlers at heart.

We were vigilant throughout the night, for we might be attacked if the unknown riders had hastened to Arabs and incited them to pursue us. We were of the opinion that they were friends who were camping in the vicinity, but during the night even a friend is dangerous if he is unaware that it is another friend he meets. The night

was cold and misty and in the morning hoar frost glittered upon our covers.

THE WINGED MONSTER

We finally reached the base of the crest where I had sighted the camels and there we found the first signs of fresh tracks. Barely had we made the ascent of the crest when we perceived numerous groups of riders coming toward us. The nearest consisted of six riders who, upon seeing that we awaited them calmly, came to a halt. But an alarm had been sounded and there was another group approaching us through a ravine like a pack of hungry wolves. They were beating their mares with their heels and rifles, and the mares were virtually flying. They did not see us from the ravine. The reason they hurried so fast was for fear the other fighters might outstrip them and get the best share of the booty. About fifty paces from us they darted up the slope and for the first time perceived us, as well as the other band, which still stood about a hundred paces away. Thereupon they emitted yells like those of ferocious beasts, beat their mares, and made one last leap toward the prey. The manes and tails of the horses and the long braids and sleeves of the riders fluttered in the air. Horse and rider seemed to be one, a winged, flying monster, its trunk black and half-naked, its left hand swinging a rifle and its right curved like a hungry talon, while its white teeth appeared as though lusting for warm, bloody flesh . . .

We heard a commanding voice from among the ranks of the first band, and suddenly there stood before me a young rider offering me his hand and saying:

"Musa, your brother Mshash welcomes you!"

He was the commander of the first group that had reached me at a gallop. I stood several paces in advance of my companions. The other riders of the first group tried to stop the second group but they did not succeed, for the rascal Hseynawi had driven two camels toward the second group and invited them to loot them. They made the camels kneel and were beginning to snatch the things loaded upon them. With a few leaps my camel was among them. I beat them with the butt of my rifle and shouted:

"You will pay me a hundredfold for everything you have damaged."

The rider who had greeted me and others who had reached us by this time came to my assistance and thus the robbers were repulsed. They returned piecemeal everything they had taken.

The rider who had greeted me introduced himself as Mshash eben Ali. He was the brother of Hadithe, chief of the Kreshe clan, who joined us a while later, with Enad eben Madi, chief of the Ahl Isa, who were camping near by. In 1909 Hadithe and his brother Mshash had met and talked with me in the camp of Prince Nuri in the depression of Sirhan. They told me they had visited Nuri only a few days before when he was camping by the volcano of Umm Wual, and that he was awaiting me. Enad eben Madi had attacked me in the spring of 1901 at Amra, where I was staying with Hayel, a brother of Prince Talal; but he had returned our stolen camels and I had given him a nickel-plated eight-shooter.

We all thanked Allah that He had guided us to friends. Surrounded by thirty riders we proceeded in all glory to the camp where every woman and girl gazed curiously at this extraordinary procession. Within the camp the riders staged a mock battle. I entered the tent of Hadithe where I

FIG. 34

The volcanic cone of Amud in the Hamad

FIG. 35

Near the road of the raiders

was served with coffee, tea and rice. He inquired about the war and complained that Abdarrahman Pasha Yusef was hiring camels for the Government from the tribes that were camping by the Pilgrim Road to Mecca, but was failing to pay the charges; and at the same time was maintaining his soldiers upon the stores and herds of the Arabs. In the evening we determined the latitude. I sat in front of the tent until late into the night, absorbed in reminiscences of my homeland and my dear ones. It was Christmas Eve!

CAMELS AFIRE!

On Christmas morning we marched eastward over the slope of Zebibiyyat in the direction of Prince Nuri's encampment accompanied by Zeydan eben Thamed, the elder brother of the chief Hadithe, and his servant Hamed. Before us the extensive volcano of Umm Wual was enveloped in haze.

We were joined by a chief of a lesser clan of the Weld Ali. He rode a young camel, behind his saddle sat his falcon, and beside the camel scampered a female hound. The chief recognized me instantly and greeted me:

"Hear, Musa, the joyful news. Your brother, Emir Nawwaf, arrived last night from Jowf to visit his father Nuri. They expect Awde abu Tayeh to arrive to-day or to-morrow. They will all be greatly pleased at your arrival and many a fat camel will be slaughtered."

This prospect of feasting so captivated his fancy that he resolved to accompany me to Nuri who, he said, was camping at Khor.

However, a camel rider later informed us that Nuri had migrated again, whereupon the chief of the Weld Ali

had returned to his people. We surmised that Nuri would not stop very soon; therefore I directed that we likewise move on after supper until the moon set.

We rode past the volcanic cones of Umm Wual and Wueyla. A stream of lava connects them. Upon the eastern slope of the depression beyond Umm Wual clustered groups of tents, the black color of which contrasted sharply with the lighter tones of the ground. Somewhat to the south of east we noticed, in about the middle of the slope, a large, solitary tent and, because it lay in the direction we were going, we decided to pass the night near it, especially since we were likely to obtain there definite news of the Prince.

In the evening we began our march through the ravine into Khor. In the depression we circled the pools, walking most of the time. Zeydan and Hseynawi were grumbling over the necessity of traveling in such cold and Zeydan tried to convince me that we had already left the tent behind. I retorted that he might immediately return to the camp of the Kreshe, which also was behind us. I jumped off my camel, made her kneel, tied her by the left leg, and lay down by her. The others followed my example.

At sunrise the temperature stood at 35° F. The camels, the baggage, the blankets,—everything—was covered with thick hoar frost. After a long time we reached the large tent we were seeking, where we learned from a herdsman that Prince Nuri was migrating to a destination somewhere east of the rain pool of Hajm.

"In this vicinity, Musa, Eben Rashid attacked the herds of the Rwala," explained Awad. "I heard about it from my uncle, may Allah have mercy on him. They were camping in the Hamad. Rains had been abundant; the

pasture was good everywhere; truffles and mushrooms grew in plenty; the camels gave more milk than ever before; and the Bedouins, therefore, were living in affluence. Then it was that their head chief, Hazza, father of Nuri, had a peculiar dream. When he awoke he said to my uncle who was serving with him:

"'Asad, what sign has Allah sent me in this dream? I saw countless swarms of locusts coming from the inner desert to my camp, crawling into the tents, upon the beds, and into the food supplies, all over the camels, and—a strange thing to relate—the locusts carried all these things —tents, beds, supplies, and even camels—away. Suddenly there was a flash of lightning among the camels, and all the herds rose to their feet and galloped in the direction of the settled territory. How would you explain this dream?'

"'May Allah prolong your life, Hazza! The dream has surely a good significance but I do not understand it. We must ask others.'

"They told the people of the dream, but nobody could interpret it. At last, seven days afterwards, in the morning, when the herds had already grazed their fill of fresh grass, Prince Eben Rashid's raiding troops appeared from the inner desert crawling one after another and covering the whole territory like locusts. They drove back the defenders of Hazza's camp, entered the camp, and began to load the tents with all that was in them on their own and the captured camels. The herds, together with their herdsmen, were surrounded. The herdsman of the white camels, who longed to save his herd, the pride of the whole tribe, finally thought of this stratagem. He saw that some pack camels were still carrying their pack saddles, left on them to protect their galled backs from the sharp beaks of ravens and crows. These saddles, which are stuffed with

straw and dry grass, he set on fire. This caused the terrified animals to shy, then to run away in mad fright. Others followed their example and in a little while all the herds were rolling in a confused mass out of the desert towards the settled territory. The raiders, after losing a number of their own riding camels, had to retreat. Then at last did Hazza comprehend the meaning of the dream sent him by Allah."

We stopped on December 26 at the rain pool of Hajm, then badly clogged up, there to await Prince Nuri. The entire broad region swarmed with grazing camels.

DEATH OF MY FRIENDS

From the east could be heard shots fired at short intervals, indicating that the sons of the reigning family were shooting at a target. Nuri's tent was pitched in a small pit so that we were unable to see it until we were very near it. No sooner did we make our appearance than the shooting ceased and all present pushed up to the front of the tent, surveying us curiously. Suddenly the slave Ali shrieked: "The Sheikh Musa!" He ran to meet us and led my camel to the left side of the tent. I had not even dismounted when the Prince stood before me and pulled me into his embrace, hugging and kissing me as if I were his brother. Behind him stood the Emir Nawwaf, extending both his hands to me; then followed a long line of my old, loyal friends, all of whom I embraced and kissed before entering the tent. Nawwaf seated me between himself and his father, and from all sides there poured upon me greetings and inquiries after my health. Among these good people I felt at home—among brothers.

I looked the gathering over, searching for my three good friends, Adhub eben Mejwel, Mamduh eben Sattam, and Saud, the son of Prince Nuri. Not seeing them, I asked where they were.

"They are gone," said the Prince. "Adhub was robbed of several camel herds by the Shammar at the watering place of Keysuma. He intercepted the raiders, recovered the animals, but was hit by a bullet and fell dead on the spot. His mare returned with the saddle empty and spattered with blood."

"And where did Mamduh perish?"

"He had undertaken a raid against the Shammar. He circled the Nefud on the west and south sides and found the Shammar and the Weld Sleyman at the wells of Beza Nethil. He took twelve herds of camels as booty and was fleeing with them westward when the enemy, who had occupied the gorges of Misma, attacked him, and Mamduh fell in the pass of Ah. The survivors of the raid reached us while we were camping at Amud."

"And where did you lose Saud?"

"He fell through treachery. He was killed by the dogs, over whom barks Eben Jazi, north of the settlement of Karkar. There he was watching herds of camels with six riders, when ten riders mounted on camels approached and greeted them, explaining that they were under the command of Awde abu Tayeh, our friend. As the garb of his part of the Hwetat is the same as that of the Hwetat of Eben Jazi and the camels of the newcomers had the brand of Awde abu Tayeh, Saud readily believed them and invited them to join him at his fire. The riders unsaddled their camels and carried the saddles to a neighboring rock where they pretended to kindle a fire. Suddenly without warning they seized their rifles and fired upon Saud and

his companions, and soon Saud and four others lay dead. Two others saved themselves in the high *ratam*[1] thicket and hastened for help. The Hwetat tried to escape but the Shalan riders soon overtook them. Seeing they could not get away, they jumped off their camels and hid in the dense underbrush in the middle of the depression of Sirhan. The pursuers surrounded the underbrush, kindled numerous camp fires, and watched the men throughout the night. The following morning the Hwetat begged for mercy, but the riders bound them, took them to the spot stained by Saud's blood, and killed them one after another with their heads turned southward, which is the manner in which sheep are killed. They deserved it for their treachery."

The Prince's voice did not falter in the least as he described the death of his friend Adhub, of his brother-in-law Mamduh, and of his own son Saud.

"What would you, brother, against the will of Allah? Two-thirds of us men depart this life through violence. There is not a single man of the remaining third who does not carry his wounds and scars. Thus it was, Musa, before us, so it shall be after us. O Allah! O Merciful!"

Toward evening I went into my tent, whither the Prince sent me a supper of peeled wheat with pieces of mutton on top of it.

THE RWALA AND THE HOLY WAR

On Sunday, December 27, we were intending to migrate, but the Bedouins were disinclined to leave their tents. A thick fog obscured the sky, penetrated the tents, and con-

[1] *Retama Raetam*, Forsk.; shrub with long, rather stiff branches, long needle-shaped leaves, and hanging, scented flowers.

tributed to the drop of temperature to below 35° F. Inside the tents fires were burning and the Bedouins crouched beside them. The cold pierced to the marrow of our bones. It is said that nowhere in inner Arabia is it so cold as upon the plateau between Enaza and Laha.

The chief of that family of the Freje clan to which our herdsman Awad belonged came to vouch for Awad's dependableness and loyalty.

Only when it grew a little warmer did the Prince come to ask me to mount my camel, as the migration was about to begin. I went with him and presently we were joined by Nawwaf and several of his escorts, and by various chiefs and slaves (Figs. 31, 32). The camels carried us by quick strides out of the moving throng, until we rode at its head. The Bedouins sat on their camels with their heads entirely shielded; from under their chins they pulled up their kerchiefs so that only their eyes could be seen. Their bodies were clad in a diversity of garments—as many of them as would go under their short, loose sheepskin coats with sleeves half a yard longer than their arms. Over their coats and kerchiefs were wrapped cloaks, which they clutched tightly to their breasts with their left hands. On their feet they wore either sandals or crude, low shoes, but some wore red riding boots. Many eyed me pityingly because I had no wool coat, and Trad eben Sattam even started to divest himself of his own lest I freeze, when the Prince chuckled:

"O Trad, not Musa but you suffer from the cold. Do you not see his footwear? Your knees are bare; his are covered with leather boots. Most likely his chest is protected as well. And why should Musa buy a wool coat when he will soon reach a land where he will sweat day and night?"

Nawwaf had donned in my honor thin, half-silk stockings and low shoes of patent leather with rubber soles; his hands were encased in white transparent gloves, which he proffered to me the moment he noted my bare hands. These pieces of finery were the gifts of various merchants trading in the settlements of the oasis of Jowf. He had ruled there only five years, but already he had acquired the manners of the settlers. From his saddle hung a sword with a remarkable hilt, the blade bearing a Dutch inscription dating back to 1672. The hilt had been adorned with precious stones and gold and silver ornaments by his young servant.

The good-hearted though vacillating youth that Nawwaf had been in 1908 and 1909 had grown into a severe and determined man (Fig. 33). His face showed traces of the hardships he had experienced; it bore the aspect of an unconquerable will that does not flinch even from cruelty. In his merry eyes was a jovial smile, but to me the smile seemed more the leer of a gratified, rapacious animal . . . Two warriors comprising his personal guard constantly rode about ten paces behind him.

Nawwaf had come to visit his father, accompanied by several hundred warriors mounted on camels and carrying a peculiar banner at the head of the line. To a long spear embellished with ostrich feathers was fastened a strip of black material upon which was sewed a piece of white cloth in the form of a sword and embroidered crosswise with the words: "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His prophet." The fighters of Nawwaf always camped together in large white tents grouped about the round one reserved for him. They were mercenaries serving for their wages and maintenance, and even their equipment belonged to Nawwaf. The least insubordina-

tion was punished severely, the transgressor being tied to a heavy tent pole which he had to drag along during the march. Greater transgressions were punished by death.

The money and food that Nawwaf needed for his soldiers he secured through the sale of loot captured from defiant enemy tribes. He had come to Nuri for the purpose of consolidating with his Bedouins and making joint raids against the Shammar, Fedan, and Druse tribes. The young chiefs and slaves were pleased at the prospect of these raids and they seemed to look forward to the fights themselves as much as to the prospective booty. A Bedouin yearns for booty day and night, not so much to enrich himself with it as for the thrill of capturing it; the greater the danger, the more alluring the adventure. As soon as the booty is safe in his hands, it ceases to interest him; he gives away what he has taken and plans whither to go for fresh loot. It has always seemed to me that the Bedouins consider fighting as a sport.

We warmed ourselves at a large fire which had been built by the slaves of the Prince. Marfud, an old chief, asked me whether I would take part in the raid against the Fedan. Desiring to learn what this plain son of the desert thought of the holy war of which so much had been said in Europe, I replied:

"Do you not know, Marfud, that the Caliph has declared holy war against unbelievers and has forbidden believers to war among themselves?"

"What does the Caliph know? What do we care for the Caliph? The Fedan are unbelievers to us, hence we fight them!"

"Why, the Fedan belong to the Aneze just as your Rwala do; they are your co-tribesmen and they are of your faith."

"I know that they are related to us through their blood and faith, but they have deceived us, hence they are worse than all the foreigners and Christians and we are in holy war against them. And the Shammar of Eben Rashid and the Druses of the Turkish Government are just as bad. What do we care about the Caliph's holy war?"

Prince Nuri and Nawwaf had announced their loyalty to the Caliph in Constantinople and yet Marfud declared:

"You obey whomsoever you want to. We guide ourselves by the law of the desert; is it not so, comrades?"

Echoing from all sides was heard the chorus: "You have spoken the truth, you have spoken the truth."

Marfud interpreted public opinion, while the Prince and Nawwaf subscribed to a political policy with which they did not sympathize. Religion, nationality, unity: these are conceptions incomprehensible to the average Bedouin. His religion is diametrically opposed to the religion of the Christians or of the Moslems. By his very nationality he differs from all his neighbors, even though they speak Arabic just as he does, and his unity ceases with his kinship. Even if the various tribes form alliances among themselves for the sake of more effectual defense, it never happens that a Bedouin allies himself permanently with a settler. There is no unity between the free tribes of the inner desert and the subjugated settlers of the tilled regions; hence it is incorrect to include inner Arabia among such Arabian countries as Egypt, Syria, or Irak. Inner Arabia is a peculiar world of its own and one that it is difficult to understand.

I was surprised to find that so many of the Rwala had been converted to Islam since the year 1909. In 1908 and 1909 I had not seen a single Rweyli pray, but in the year

1914 it was different. I think that it was the result of Nawwaf's activity for, having captured Jowf and other settlements, he was obliged to recite prayers with the fanatical settlers. His soldiers, hailing from the villages by the middle Euphrates and from Kasim, were accustomed to prayer and many of them could recite an entire chapter from the Koran, teaching others and exhorting them to the observance of religious precepts. The soldiers from Kasim, like the settlers from Jowf, were pervaded with the ideas of the Wahhabites; hence Nawwaf had no alternative but to join them and uphold, outwardly at least, the Wahhabite teachings. Therefore the conductor of prayers loudly ordered his soldiers to the recitation of the prescribed prayers and prayed with them. Prayers were said near Nuri's tent also, but invariably in the evening. Nobody prayed in the morning as the Bedouins slept long after sunrise; but occasionally they prayed in the afternoon. Many a Bedouin followed the example of the chiefs and prayed also. He would imitate all their motions but would not repeat the prayers, for he did not know them. This I learned by asking many men in vain to repeat them.

What amazed me most in the Rwala was their increasing hatred of the Christians in general and of the Inkliz (English) in particular. This had resulted from the wars of the Turkish Government with Italy and the Balkan States. Not that the Bedouins cared in the least about the Government's loss of large territories in the Balkans and in Tripolis; on the contrary, they preferred to see it defeated and weakened. But they did resent deeply its action in requisitioning from the Akeyl for military purposes the camels these had bought from the Bedouins. Naturally the Akeyl were now indisposed to buy camels, since they

could never hope to get as much for them from the Government as they would have received in Egypt; consequently the Bedouins, unable to sell their camels, were suffering from want. Moreover, when at the end of June they entered the tilled regions where the Government was stronger than they, they were dispossessed by troops who commandeered their horses and camels for the Sultan in Constantinople.

Since the year 1910 the Bedouins had fared badly. Strange to say, however, they did not blame the Government as much as they did the Christians and the Inkliz. Had not the Christians, they said, provoked the Government, the Government would have let the Bedouins alone; and when the Christians did attack the Government, the Inkliz should have repulsed them. The Inkliz, they said, had promised to protect the Sultan in Constantinople from the Moskub (Russians) and therefore they were bound to protect him from the other Christians as well. Since they failed to fulfill their promise they were regarded by the Bedouins as guilty of treason and at the same time as instrumental in bringing about their own plight. For the Bedouins knew that the fewer pastures the Sultan had in the vicinity of Constantinople, the more he would strive to appropriate those belonging to themselves, and that, should he be defeated in the World War of 1914, he would oppress them so much the more. Moreover, since the grazing lands of the Inkliz were not sufficient even for themselves, it was rumored that they were bent on seizing the territories belonging to the Muntefizh and Eben Sabbah Arabs and that this was their motive for despatching soldiers to Kweyt and Basra. For these reasons the Bedouins were imperiled by them also . . . Thus com-

mented the Rwala who were riding with me; but the Prince and Nawwaf kept still.

We were traveling through a monotonous, undulating region covered with dark, fine gravel. Only in the swales grew long, narrow strips of various plants. We encamped in the gully of Arkat. The sepulcher of Bteyyen, head chief of the Kmusa, is near here. He was renowned far and wide for his hospitality and for his fondness for coffee.

His slaves had thrust into his grave a high tent pole as if to commemorate the tent in which nourishment and protection had been found by so many travelers. Whenever the Kmusa pass by his grave, they lay upon it a small cup containing a few drops of coffee, the drink he had liked so much. The Rwala ridicule this custom but the Kmusa, who camp most of the time in Palmyrena, where graves are held in reverence, persist in imitating the local settlers in this respect.

ONE AGAINST MANY

"It is from here, Musa, that we started on our last raid against Turki, head chief of the Fedan," said Nuri. "Turki was classed with the heroic men and was famous all over the desert. But he continued to provoke the Rwala incessantly. He was generally called Hadhdhab, meaning omnipresent, as never half a month passed without news coming in of some fresh attack by him on a Rwala camp. Many a warrior was afraid of him, the women frightened their children with his name, and herdsmen were reluctant to drive the herds out of the camps. Finally he enraged the Rwala beyond endurance. Sattam agreed with other chiefs to undertake a raid against him, may Allah have mercy on

him. Personally he liked Turki and did not wish to fight him, for besides being a brother of his favorite wife, Turkiyye, he was also a man of noble mind and honest. The Rwala, however, threatened to depose Sattam if he would not crush Turki once for all. He had to obey. Sattam set out for the decisive fight with six hundred riders on horseback and eight hundred on camels, he himself being the commander-in-chief. Khalaf âl Idhen was his chief lieutenant. We rode for a long time without knowing where we should find Turki. In a small camp of the Sleyb we learned that he was encamped at Heri. Then Sattam hired a Slubi and sent him secretly at night to Turki to warn him with these words:

"'O Turki! I was sent to you by your brother Sattam. We undertook a raid against you not knowing that you were encamped on our route. Yet it has happened so, and I cannot prevent my people from attacking you. Think it over! If you believe you can beat us, behold! here we are, but in my opinion you should make your escape to-night and keep at a distance from us. If you do that we shall come to-morrow to your camp, see that you are gone, stop a while, and then return to our kinsfolk.'

"This message enraged Turki to such an extent that he drew his saber menacingly and commanded the Slubi to be gone, with the words:

"'Leave at once! Let nothing of what you have now said to me escape you. If you utter a single word before my people I shall kill you. Am I, from whom the Rwala have fled so often, expected now to run away from them?'

"The next day Turki migrated and had his tent erected so far southwest of the camp that his slaves wondered not a little.

"Scouts informed us that the enemy were putting up

their tents and that coffee was being ground at Turki's tent.

"At that moment every rider mounted his horse, grasped his weapons and ammunition, and waited for the command. The commanders pointed out the places for the riders of tired or overburdened she-camels to wait, placed the other camel riders between them and Turki's camp, divided the horse troop into halves, posting one of them on the flank of the camel riders to form the reserve and using the other for attack. We attacked the camp directly. The herdsmen sighted us from afar, sent an alarm, and in a moment the riders had mounted their mares.

"At that time the Âl Awaji clan was also camping with Turki so we had at once several hundred riders against us. The fight of rider against rider lasted until sunset. Turki exhausted six mares, his slaves exchanging them at his command. I and many other Rwala were wounded and still the fight went on. Sattam was loath to call up the reserve, wanting it either to decide the victory or to cover the retreat.

"Finally Turki's mare was shot. In falling she pressed his leg to the ground and as he was clad in a mail shirt he could not free himself quickly enough and was stabbed twice by a spear. At that moment Gharraf, Sattam's slave, sprang to the struggling chief in order to save him, pulled him from under the horse, and had the women carry him into the tent. This was occupied at once by four of Sattam's slaves as guards against the Rwala, inflamed by the battle. When Turki's fall was jubilantly announced by the aggressors, the Fedan began to retreat but they were intercepted by the reserve cavalry. The camel riders were speeding to the camp to pick up their dead and wounded friends. Khalaf âl Idhen, who had been left in

charge of the camel riders, reached the tent where Turki was now being cared for by Sattam himself, and was on the point of giving him the death blow when he was prevented by Sattam, who threatened him with instant death should he lay a finger on his friend. Then Khalaf called on his camel riders to come and get the enemy themselves. In response the Rwala—and there were some five hundred of them—surrounded Turki's tent, while Khalaf spoke to the Prince thus:

"'O Sattam! the Arabs do not fight on such conditions. Behold, we shall not ask you again. I swear by Allah, if you do not give way you will roll into your grave. Can you not see that the muzzles of all the rifles are pointing at you?'

"Thus coerced, Sattam turned to Turki with the words: 'Forgive me, my brother, and may Allah also forgive me. You see how my Rwala obey me. O Khalaf, O rascal, sell me him whom you wish to destroy. I will give you gold!'

"'Away with you, brother! Know you not that Nuri has fallen and that Kurdi, Naser eben Mejel, and countless others have fallen to-day?'

"Nodding to his slaves, Sattam then withdrew from Turki's tent, stricken with grief on hearing that his brother Kurdi and I, Nuri, were among the slain. Kurdi was dead, but I still lived and later fully recovered. After Sattam's departure the enraged Rwala threw themselves on Turki and beat him to death. They captured all the herds and tents in the camp. Over thirty Rwala had fallen, and about a hundred were wounded. Of the fallen, the hero Zaëytel was the most lamented. We also lost twenty-five mares.

Fig. 36

The northern part of Jowf

Fig. 37

The southern part of Jowf

"Recite, Mindil, the poem in which this victory is depicted!"

Mindil recited:

"O you who ride a she-camel with regular pace,
A sterile one, unburdened for eight long years!—
Over the plateau towards the evening she trots,
So fleet of foot, life-long she's run unurged—
Reaching that babbler, Mehda al-Hebdani,
Relate the tidings that he knows full well.
The sisters of Kutne attacked us, though not at feud,
Their riders seized our camels where wintered the herds.
The news was true, and men shook their heads about it,
Whoever a wife had, ceased to press her breasts.
The throwers from saddles would not give heed to Sattam,
They rushed upon you like a rolling flood.
O Hzeyl! By Allah, Kayem, like a rutting camel,
Charged after captured she-camels with fleet-footed mares.
When the dew dispersed, red dye for your chief they garnered:
Blood-splashed, in a cloud of dust, 'mid thunder of weapons,
Turki was struck!—struck by the throwers from saddles—
By the hand of a hero, hurtled off a mare's back.
This deed the glory; not camels seized from the curved lands;
This deed drove your families from out the shelter of tents.
O shame on him whose followers were like Haddaj
For our swords! how glorious the dripping of their blood!
Our camels, O Hzeyl! grew gay with untouched pasture;
Your young camels, O Hzeyl! eat off their own hair.
Let not your herds come near the *ruthe* in Khor,
The while our own young camels wander there."

XII. FROM NURI'S CAMP TOWARDS THE SOUTH

THE RWALA AND THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT

On Monday, December 28, we remained in the camp. Before noon Nuri and Nawwaf came to discuss the political situation and the sentiment of the Bedouins. Nuri advised me not to take seriously either the propaganda or what he himself wrote to the Government.

"You know my heart, brother," he said. "You know that I do not trust the Government and it does not trust me. Were it not for you, I should still be sitting in Ghuta as an honorable prisoner of the Government. They pretended to need me in the war against the Inkliz. Said I: 'Of what good shall I alone be to you? Send me into the desert and I will bring you thousands of warriors and we shall slay the Inkliz'; but they kept postponing the date of my departure from day to day. Finally Allah sent me you. You vouched for me that I would not attack the Government, and the Government released me. The Government believed you when it would not believe me. They fear I might fight them. Truly, I should like to do so, but I cannot. They instigated against me the chiefs Hachem eben Mheyd and Eben Rashid. Hachem is attacking from the north. Eben Rashid from the south. Help me to make peace with both.

"Why should we, sons of Arabia, massacre one another in the interests of a foreign government? They incite us against each other and we respond. We are lacking in

reason. If we lived in a peaceful alliance the Government would tremble before us; now, however, they deride us. They want me to assist them, me, Nuri, whom that same cursed Government sought to hang four years ago! me, Nuri, who languished for two years in their cage! me, Nuri, whom you saved from the gallows, whom you alone, Musa, delivered from prison! Now I am to help the Government and march against the Inkliz! In that cage I learned to conceal even matters that were consuming my heart.

"The Government can damage me and mine. Arms and ammunition are brought to us by the Akeyl from Kweyt and Azheyr, but they cannot supply us from there with clothing and grain. It is too far away. We are dependent upon the settlers from Syria and Irak, and they are still in the power of the Government. They will sell us nothing without the sanction of the Government, and we cannot take anything from them by force. Our fighters are impotent in the gardens and among the stone dwellings and an easy aim for the rifles of the Government soldiers. The settlers hate the Government as much as we do, but they are united with it against us.

"What are we to do but to wait patiently and prepare for fighting? I have promised the Government all they have asked of me and shall continue to promise both verbally and in writing. I pay the taxes as they come due, over four thousand Turkish pounds [$18,000] annually; I contribute to the expense of the war, give the Government camels and mares, feed it with gold, and—curse it. Accursed be they who devour my gold! Sami Pasha ate much of my gold and when I reproached him he had me sentenced to the gallows. Since then I remonstrate not. The present governor has not required gold from

me. He asks that I remain loyal during the war and promises after the war to help me against Eben Rashid. Whether he speaks the truth or a lie, I know not."

"He lies, father," interrupted Nawwaf. "How could he speak the truth when he knows that Enver Pasha considers Eben Rashid his most loyal ally and sends him arms, ammunition, and some two hundred and thirty Turkish pounds monthly [$1035]? At the beginning of this year he sent him by rail to Hejr fifteen thousand Mauser rifles, four hundred thousand cartridges, field guns, and so much gold that ten camels could hardly carry it. Minister Zamel eben Subhan transported the arms to Hayel and distributed them among the Shammar and even the Sleyb. And what did Enver send these rifles to Eben Rashid for? That he might the more easily defeat Eben Saud, who eighteen months before had driven the Turkish soldiers out of the province of Hasa.

"This same Enver had appointed Eben Saud governor and commandant of the whole of Nejd, had assured him of the Sultan's grace and of his own favor; yet he gave to Eben Rashid the arms with which to wage war against him. To-day the guns sent him by Enver are battering at the settlements of Eben Saud in Kasim, and the troops, armed with Enver's Mauser rifles, are annihilating the bands of my father and myself. Who, then, would trust Enver Pasha?

"Tell me, brother Musa, do you understand our Government? And this same Government wants us to help it against the Inkliz! They have ordered my father to do so and have written likewise to me. Why do they not write thus to their friend, Eben Rashid? Shame upon such a Government! Whoever would believe that they will support us after the war is an artless child."

"And what do you, son Nawwaf, propose to do? Are you strong enough to-day to destroy Eben Rashid?"

"I am, father. If allied with your fighters we shall have at least five thousand rifles."

"What is that against fifteen thousand, or, say, against only ten thousand or five thousand rifles belonging to Eben Rashid, who has plenty of good ammunition, while we must be sparing of bad ammunition? You might overpower his minister, Eben Subhan, perhaps you could take from him a large booty, but never could you drive him out of the settlements. He would gather strength and attack you again. Nay, sonny, we must not march against Eben Rashid. We must obey the Government and wait."

"How long?" asked Nawwaf.

"Until the great war between the Government and the Inkliz ends. This time the Government wants peace among us. We, the Rwala, need peace also. Two years I have been in prison and two years the Rwala have been fighting among themselves and against the Government. If we strengthen ourselves at home, we shall be that much stronger on the outside. Why should we disobey and refuse peace? The aim of the Government is different, but we both may use the same means."

"Of what avail will a government which is constantly changing be to us? We have received nothing and we shall receive nothing."

"I believe your father is right, Nawwaf," I said. "You do not know what awaits you, hence you must not weaken yourselves. Try to strengthen yourselves at home and you will be feared by Eben Rashid as well as by the Government. In so far as I know, the Fedan and Ebede tribes will make peace with you if you ask them."

"What! do you mean that we should ask Eben Hdeyb

and Eben Mheyd for peace?" exclaimed both Nuri and Nawwaf.

"I am of the opinion that you both should ask Eben Rashid for peace as well."

"O Musa, do you think that Eben Shalan will ever write to the son of a slave?"

"O brother Nuri, you shall not write to the son of a slave, that is, to the minister Eben Subhan, but to Prince Saud eben Rashid."

"But then the Fedan as well as Eben Rashid would boast of our fear of them," exclaimed Nawwaf, "and yet you see we are preparing for a raid."

"O Nawwaf, who advised you to take Jowf? Who persuaded your father to give his consent? Who aided you with deed as well as advice? You know who he was. Since I now advise you to offer peace to Eben Rashid and urge your father to offer it too, so am I willing also to aid with deeds. You have waged war for five years. For five years your settlers and Bedouins have suffered. I know them well. I am sure they will be glad of the peace for which they are yearning. Give it to them regardless of contemptuous jeers. You know your own strength best; others cannot add to or subtract from it. Offer peace. Thus shall you prove to the people of Jowf your good will and they will cling to you. And you, brother Nuri, offer peace not only to Eben Rashid but to the head chiefs of the Fedan and Ebede tribes as well. The head chief of the latter, Barjas eben Hdeyb, is a friend of mine. I know that he esteems you and that he will persuade Hachem, the head chief of the Fedan, to subscribe to the peace. Prove to your Rwala and to the Fedan that your reason is more provident, that you can see more clearly into the future than others. They will esteem you

so much the more. Why do you waver? You alone defend in battle the weary and wounded; protect them now also. Conquer your pride for a while and you shall conquer both Hachem and Eben Rashid. Why cannot Nuri be a victor in politics also?"

"By Allah, Musa, it seems to me that you are right. I will write both to Hachem and Eben Rashid and you shall take the message with you."

"You will have the messages written and will send them yourself. One of your slaves will go to Hachem, another to Eben Rashid."

"But then everybody will know that I am suing for peace."

"Why should you conceal it? Your message might be lost, or Hachem as well as Eben Rashid might deny it; but your slave will not get lost."

"What if Hachem or Eben Rashid should reject my offer? It would be an insult to me."

"Hachem will not refuse," I replied. "My friend Barjas eben Hdeyb will take care of that. I myself will see that Eben Rashid does not refuse. Your slave shall go with me. He shall deliver your message and Nawwaf's in my presence and I will act. He shall not come back until peace be effected, which shall be affirmed to you by a special letter from Eben Rashid signed also by me. You will have the message written and will send it by a special slave."

"I will."

"And you, Nawwaf?"

"I will do as my father does."

"Will you promise it?"

"I will, but my heart bleeds. What booty we could have taken! Who will compensate us for that?"

"Allah, and that soon, I believe."

We then talked about effecting a reconciliation with Fares and Eben Jandal.

AWDE ABU TAYEH AND THE WAR

Nawwaf asked me if it was true that the Inkliz fight only in the middle of the sea where no rider upon camel or horse can overtake them. Both Nuri and Nawwaf believed that the Inkliz had taken Egypt as late as August or September, 1914. Up to that time, they thought, it had belonged to the Turkish Government and to the Sultan.

Often the Rwala asked me if it was true that the Inkliz had exiled all the Arabs and Moslems from Egypt, settling the land with foreigners and Christians. I wondered who it was that used this manner of inciting the Arabs against the foreigners and Christians. Nuri and Nawwaf declared that they would not march into Egypt for any cause whatever. It was too far, they asserted, and one must go through and across seas in which are fish that devour Bedouins as well as camels. They would not believe that Egypt could be reached from the depression of Sirhan in ten nights, that it is not necessary to wade through the sea, that the "sea" (Suez Canal) might be crossed by a bridge just as the Euphrates is crossed. Nuri invoked the intervention of Allah against every request that they march beyond the confines of Arabia.

"Let the Government promise me whatever it will, I will not march beyond the Dead Sea. Why, death menaces whoever ventures there and everything there is dead. Why should I go there? I have no relatives there. From

Aleppo to Oman camp the Aneze; here I am at home. In this territory I can march a hundred days from north to south, but ten days west of Mayku I have not a relative. I will not go there. Why should I go to bring death to myself?"

Awde laughed at Nuri, but Nawwaf agreed with him.

"You, Awde, are at home in the ravines by the Dead and the Red Seas. Your relatives sit there. They will help you, but who there would help us?"

"Allah."

"Allah? Allah does not want us to make raids in the west. Had He wished so, He would have settled some of our relatives there. But He has left all the Aneze in Arabia."

"Against whom would you like best to march?" I asked Nuri.

"Against the Druses, Musa. They are our bitterest enemy. I may become reconciled with all the Bedouins, nay, even with settlers and Christians, but never with the Druses and the inhabitants of the volcanic region of the Hawran, the Ahali al-Jebel. Like sly hyenas they creep in the night toward our camp, steal our mares and camels, drive off the flocks of goats and sheep under our protection, and take them into their lava lairs whither we cannot pursue them either on horse or camel. Whatever they steal, they sell cheaply to the Druses in the range of the Sheikh [Hermon], to the Circassians, and Turkish officials. When, in July and August, we camp west of the Hawran, we frequently meet our mares and camels that have been stolen from us by the Hawran vultures. We prove by trustworthy witnesses that the animals are ours but the Government never concedes our right to them, insisting that we apprehend and bring the robbers before them. Go

and look for a robber who has attacked you in the blackness of the night! Go and seek him in the volcanic ravines whither even infantry will not venture! We rage, and the Circassians, Druses, and Turks snigger. If prudence deserts us and we punish the Druses or the Circassians with arms, in will rush an army of the Government to surround our camp and threaten to open fire from their field guns upon our wives and children unless we compensate the Druses and the Circassians for all their losses. Oh, that the Government would permit us to watch the Circassians and the Druses! It would be not only I, Nuri, who would march against them, but all the tribes from Aleppo to Teyma. Have I spoken the truth, Awde?"

"You have, Nuri."

Letters on the subject of peace were despatched to some of the chiefs and the Government. Whether they reached their destination or not I do not know; but it matters little, as they contained words designed to obscure the beliefs of their authors. It was politics, as Nuri said.

THE "TRIBES" OF EUROPE

In the afternoon of Wednesday, December 30, I went to Nuri's tent to greet some of the chiefs of the Amarat, who had come to settle various discords. The Amarat already knew of the occupation of Basra by the English. They were much more interested in the World War than the Rwala and were eager to know the grouping of the various governments. They had considerable difficulty with the terms Fransa [France] and Franj [Franks]. Both the Rwala and the Amarat had believed that all Europe was Fransa and that all the inhabitants of the continent

were called Franj; now they were learning that Fransa was merely a part of Europe and Franj the name of the tribe camping in that part. Why, then, were all the Europeans called Franj, even though they did not all belong to the tribe of the Franj? This is how the Prince explained it:

"Franj is the family still reigning over all Europe. As Eben Saud rules a large territory and various tribes, so the Franj have held under their sway many tribes like the Alman [Germans], Namsa [Austrians], Talyan [Italians], Inkliz [English], Rusiya [Russians], Moskub [Muscovites], Serbya [Serbians], Rum and others. Very many years ago the Rum [Greeks] threw off their yoke, and this is the reason why they are called Rum and not Franj. The Inkliz also have won a good deal of independence and are guided according to their own counsel and will; but by some they are still counted among the Franj, while others hold that they are a free country. Now the Alman and Namsa tribes have revolted against the Franj, although the Serbya, Rusiya, Moskub, and Inkliz still support them.

"The enmity is bitterest between the Inkliz and the Alman, about as it is between the Druses and the Rwala, or between the Kurds and the Amarat or the Fedan. The Inkliz have many islands in the sea, upon which live many peoples whom they send against the Alman. The latter are the most proficient in the manufacture of arms; the best rifles, revolvers, and pistols come from them or from the Namsa. But of what avail are arms when men to use them are lacking? The Alman and the Namsa are very clever, but they have a small army. Hence the Government and the Sultan in Constantinople decided to send their soldiers against the Franj and especially against the Inkliz. These three governments—those of the Al-

man, Namsa, and Atrak [Turks]—have made an alliance not so much against the Franj as against the Inkliz; for the Franj have not taken anything belonging to the Sultan, but several months ago the Inkliz dispossessed him of Egypt and it is their intention to take Basra and the whole of Irak away from him also."

One of the company remarked that the Moskub were very numerous too and that they wanted to drive the Sultan from Constantinople. Said Nuri:

"The Moskub are very numerous, but the tribe Rusiya exceeds them greatly. Many kingdoms belong to the Rusiya and they are feared even by the Persians; yet they have not liberated all of their own blood. Even the tribe of my brother Musa forms a part of the Rusiya as we do of the Aneze; yet his tribe must obey the Namsa. The Rusiya are very numerous, but they are not brave. I have heard that they have been driven from their own territory by the small tribe of Yaban [Japanese]. The most terrible of all the warring tribes are the Inkliz. They are very rich, yet they are covetous for new countries. You shall see that they will be victorious even at Basra, not through arms but through politics. Akeyl that have come from the territory of the Hend [India] have told me that nobody keeps as good order as the Inkliz. But what credit is that to them when they take away freedom? Who of you wants to be a serf? We can resist the Government, but can we resist the Inkliz when they come to offer gold for our freedom?"

The aged chief Razi said:

"Fear not, Nuri; our forefathers have been free and the Inkliz shall not snatch from us our inherited freedom either with weapons or gold!" And all present agreed with him.

I asked the chiefs of the Amarat whether they would enter the holy war against the Inkliz.

"Our holy war is to protect our tents and herds. Should the Inkliz try to touch them, woe to them! As long as they fight the Government in the territory of the settlers, let the Government send its soldiers and its settlers against them. Up to now the Inkliz are neither our friends nor our enemies. What they will become to us, only Allah knows."

"You have spoken the truth, brother," said Nuri, "but we must obey the Government. May Allah grant it victory!"

When he was accompanying me back to my tent, he said: "O Musa, how mindful I must be of politics that nobody may blacken me with the Government! The Government orders us to wage holy war against the unbelievers, against the Inkliz. Of what have the unbelievers or the Inkliz robbed me? But the Government, of what has it already deprived us! They wanted to hang me arbitrarily. Do you know against whom I should like best to march? Do you know against whom I bear a hatred much greater than against all the Inkliz and unbelievers combined?"

On Thursday the temperature dropped and the entire region was covered with a hard hoar frost. I finished my notes. Prince Nuri, to whom, as well as to Nawwaf, I had brought a fine army rifle (provided with a telescope sight) and a hundred cartridges, would have liked very much to see what other weapons I had and he went away considerably disgruntled when told that I should not unpack them.

In the afternoon Awde abu Tayeh, in company with Nuri and Nawwaf, came to bid me good-by. We dis-

cussed the results of our mutual conferences. They all promised that they would not undertake any large raid against either the Arabs or the settlers without my knowledge; and they resolved to offer the protection of the desert to all the refugees from regions subject to the Government.

THE NEW GUIDE

Both Nuri and Nawwaf, and Awde as well, feared for my life in the territory of Eben Rashid and pleaded with me not to venture there.

The minister Zamel eben Subhan, who had murdered his cousin Hmud, had in turn been murdered by his kinsman Saud eben Subhan, who now held the reins of power in the territory of Eben Rashid.

"Look, Musa," said Nawwaf, "the minister is a traitor and a traitor knows neither Allah nor honor. He knows that you are my friend; that you aided me in the conquest of Jowf. He will be incited to action against you by the very men I expelled from Jowf. Who will protect you? May Allah preserve your life, but I fear I shall behold you no more. He will not kill you in the open, but his slaves will attack you in the night or will poison you."

"Do not fear, brother! Allah will help me and I shall help myself. Not all the Shammar are traitors like Eben Subhan. I shall not go to him until I find among the Shammar a powerful protector. I know many a chief of the tribes of the Sinjara and Abde. The Sinjara detest Eben Subhan, the descendant of a slave, and they are more powerful than he."

"But how will you reach the Sinjara?"

At this juncture Awde said: "My brother Muhammad

found at Amud a Shammari who had been starved and was near death. He took him into his tent, dripped butter into his throat, and revived him. As I was departing I overheard that his name was Nazel and that he was descended from the family of Eben Thneyyan. I will go back to-day and send him over to you. He is sick and you, Musa, have the medicines; you may cure him."

Nawwaf and Nuri both assured me that the family of Eben Thneyyan was among the foremost Shammar families. Thus I could obtain in Nazel the best escort, provided, of course, that Awde had told the truth. I begged him to send the Shammari to me immediately, which he promised and then departed.

On Friday, January 1, 1915, Nuri brought me an elderly man of the name of Uneys eben Bneyye, who for years had been a neighbor of Eben Rmal, a powerful chief of the Shammar. He wished to return to him with several camels and wanted to join me. Uneys, believing that Eben Rmal was camping somewhere in the vicinity of Jubba, tried to persuade me to go to Eben Rashid by the Khall route leading from Jowf through the watering places of Shezhizh and Jubba to the town of Hayel. Nawwaf likewise was in favor of this route; but it did not appeal to me, for it was too well known. I should have preferred to go either through the eastern or the western part of the Nefud. I tried to question Uneys about the district around Jubba, but I found that he was wholly unqualified for giving topographical descriptions.

Nawwaf complained that his people were dissatisfied because the raid would not materialize. When Nuri asked his slaves which of them wanted to go with me, Abdallah volunteered. He was the one who had accompanied me on my journey from Dmeyr to Resafa in 1908, and,

knowing him to be a reliable man though lacking in foresight and energy, I accepted him.

The next day we migrated. Nawwaf soon overtook me and from afar greeted me thus:

"May you be strong, Musa!"

To which I replied: "Welcome! May strong himself be the man who wishes me strength!"

I talked with him about the proposed mediation with Eben Rashid. We agreed that Nawwaf would march with his clans to the boundary of the Nefud, where he would await word from me. Should the minister Eben Subhan refuse reconciliation, I was to turn to the Sinjara and try to persuade them to join Nawwaf; whereupon he was to come with his own fighters and Nuri's, join with the Sinjara, and strike at Eben Subhan from the north, while Eben Saud was to press him from the south. I well knew the danger the plan involved. I was aware that Enver Pasha and the Turkish Government trusted the minister of Eben Rashid as their most loyal friend, and that they would accuse me of agitation in the interests of the English. I was also familiar with the fact that Eben Subhan possessed more effective arms than ours and that we should be unable to drive him out of Hayel if he once fortified it. I regretted my contribution toward a new civil war among the Shammar, who had spilt so much of their own blood during the last fourteen years, but I reasoned that, should we fail in curtailing Eben Subhan and his party, they would cause more harm than we ever could.

After this discussion Nawwaf returned to his warriors, while I rode on with Nuri at the head of the camel riders.

Sunday morning, as I was sitting writing on the ground in my tent, in came Nawwaf, bringing a short, pale, lean

Fig. 38

The Mared tower, Jowf

man of about thirty years, who wore a ragged shirt and an old mantle. Shivering with cold, he fell to the ground in front of me and implored my protection. He was the Shammari, Nazel eben Dukhi eben Thneyyan, of whom Awde abu Tayeh had told me. Nawwaf introduced him thus:

"Behold, Musa, this is Nazel eben Thneyyan, the most renowned commander of the Shammar raiding forces."

I smiled. Could it be possible that this little man was a celebrated leader? However, there was a peculiar twinkle in Nazel's eyes which immediately changed my estimation of him. In this slender body I discerned a powerful spirit. Nawwaf rejoined:

"Brother, I know Nazel and vouch for him. Talk with him and trust in whatever he may promise. I must say farewell to you. I depart now and you will depart in four days. Come back to me. You know that you have a brother in Jowf."

We embraced and Nawwaf departed. Thirty riders were waiting in front of my tent to accompany him on his round of tax-collecting among all the tribes and clans subject to him and his father. He needed money and supplies for his standing army and when raids were scarce he sought the aid of his tribes. He intended to return to Jowf in about twenty days and await my advices. Meantime he gave me a letter to his regent in Jowf, the negro Amer, directing him to welcome me in holiday dress and to obey me as he would obey Nawwaf himself. Indeed, he even went so far as to inform him that during my sojourn in Jowf he had transferred all power from him, Amer, to me; and he proclaimed to the inhabitants of Jowf that I went to arbitrate a peace with Eben Rashid.

After Nawwaf's departure I had Nazel lie down in

the large tent to warm up and sent my servant Naser to the peddler to purchase whatever the man needed.

Meanwhile I received a visit from Muhammad abu Tayeh, brother of Awde, who told me of Nazel's sufferings:

"Nazel eben Thneyyan was entrusted with the delivery to Nawwaf of important letters from his cousin Fahad and other Sinjara chiefs. Two men, a Freji and a Sharari, accompanied him from his tent. Nazel and the Freji rode camels, while the Sharari walked. During the night Nazel's companions disappeared with his camel, his rifle, and all the supplies; and yet Nazel had protected them in the territory of the Shammar and they had promised to protect him in the territory of the Rwala. Thus they betrayed him—may Allah betray them likewise!

"For three days and two nights Nazel trudged alone toward the northeast. He obtained drink from various puddles but found nothing to eat, as fresh grasses had not yet sprung up. Finally he collapsed from exhaustion. Allah directed my steps to him. I was out hunting with a hound and a falcon, found him, took him into my tent, and revived him. For five days Nazel was not able to stand."

Nuri, who investigated the occurrence, thought that the Freji in the case might be identical with Khalifa eben Ghathyan. He directed the relatives of the man to compensate Nazel for the injury, but they objected that it had not been proved that one of their blood had committed so contemptible a deed. They agreed, however, to interrogate Khalifa themselves and compel him to make restitution should he be convicted. Nawwaf promised to look for the Sharari upon whom the Freje were heaping the guilt. Nuri offered Nazel a good camel and a saddle.

Toward evening Nazel came to me and begged me to let him stay in my tent as he feared the revenge of the Dughman clan, six of whom he had killed in a fight on the Pilgrim Road from Kufa. Nuri announced from his tent that Nazel was my guest and that whoever harmed him would fare badly. The Dughman, who had learned of his presence, sneaked about my tent like hungry wolves, but none of them offended Nazel by word or deed.

I talked with Nazel about the route we were to follow. He pointed out that if I wished to reach the Prince in person it would be better to go along the edge of the Nefud to the fortress of Hayyaniyye, where we might learn of Eben Rashid's camp. Nuri objected, saying that we were sure to encounter raiding bands on the borders of the Nefud. At this juncture Nazel smiled lightly and said:

"May Allah prolong your life! It is said that I am the best chief of raiding bands, hence I surely know how to protect myself from them and elude them."

I immediately decided to travel along the eastern borders, where vast scientific work was beckoning me. We were to fulfill Nuri's wish that we stop in Jowf to ascertain from Amer whether it had rained in the eastern part of the Nefud, and then we were to take the route that Allah had destined for us.

Wishing to test Nazel's ability to determine the directions of individual localities, I questioned him about regions with which I was familiar. I asked him to designate with two pebbles on the ground inside my tent the position of the pole star and of the south and tested his representations with the compass. The horizon was overcast by a thick fog; the sun was entirely obscured. Nazel glanced at the upper part of the tent, took the pebbles

in his right hand, stretched out his hand, and scratched a long, straight line in the sand. Then he placed the larger pebble at one end of the line and the smaller pebble at the other, and pointing to the larger, said:

"This, O Chief, is the polar side and this is south."

I glanced at the point of the compass needle and saw that he had deviated but five degrees. I was much pleased with his accuracy, for I knew it would facilitate my work. He then took a handful of pebbles, spread them before him, and, using them as a medium, designated the location of various watering places and other cardinal points in the regions known to me. He fashioned the mountains from sand and cut the valleys between them. Watching him, I became convinced that he was familiar with the country and that I should get along well with him after we had become acquainted.

The next day the herdsman, Awad, notified me that his foot ached and that he was unable to take care of my camels; I suspected, however, that this was a subterfuge prompted by his dread of the journey to Eben Rashid.

I worked all day with Nazel, who drew for me the Pilgrim Road from Hayel to Kufa and its neighborhood. I endeavored to test his statements by a medley of questions to find out whether they were contradictory, but I was unable to trip him up. I felt certain, therefore, that he was not only a renowned military commander but a formidable leader of robbing bands as well. One so familiar with the vast desert may easily take and keep booty.

But my lengthy conversations with Nazel were exasperating to my younger friends among the Rwala, the small sons of Nawwaf!

On Wednesday the Prince entered just as we were at breakfast. He showed surprise at the large quantity of

milk we had, asserting that he had not had any milk for over a week, that of all his camels only two had been yielding, and that now even these had ceased to give any.

"Nay, brother. your camels have not ceased to give milk."

"How do you know?"

"This milk is their milk."

"The milk of my camels? And pray, who fetches it for you?"

"Your herdsman, Fheyd. I promised him a quarter of a *mejidiyye* daily if he would bring me milk for breakfast, which he does."

"Oh, that rascal!" exclaimed the Prince. "He carries it to you for a quarter of a *mejidiyye* and then he tells me he has not milked."

"Do not be angry, brother. To-morrow I depart and your camels will give milk for you alone."

"May the milk of my camels give you health, Musa!"

We made preparation for departure and apportioned the loads. A strong camel is capable of carrying as much as one and a half *kuntar*, almost 660 lbs., but a camel thus loaded cannot go more than two miles an hour. Our camels were to make on the average two and three quarters miles an hour, therefore we could not load them heavier than about 330 lbs. Many of them were very emaciated and lank, but Nazel gladdened me with his prediction that they would soon fatten in the territory of the Shammar, where they would find profuse pasture.

ACROSS THE HAMAD TO JOWF

On Thursday, January 7, loading all the tents and supplies upon the camels, we left Nuri's tent. When I went

to the Prince's tent to bid him farewell he warned me of the proximity of the Shammar, who had attacked the camp of the Beni Sakhr only two days before. He stepped out of the tent with me and commended me to the protection of Allah. Some of my friends accompanied us beyond the camp.

Nazel rode alongside me. One by one we were joined by twelve men who were returning to the settlements in the oasis of Jowf. The sky had darkened and a cold southeasterly wind was blowing. Shortly after noon we reached the watershed between the Wudiyan and the Hamad. The view here was boundless but monotonous. There was no striking natural prominence visible; nothing but undulating heights and wide depressions unrolled before our eyes.

Some time later the sky became overclouded and it started to rain. We headed toward a camp of the Kwachbe in a wide hollow, as our escorts feared the rain and were averse to passing the night in the open. Mafrud, the chief of the camp, called on me and invited me to supper. I thanked him but stayed at home, where Nazel told me many things about the tribes and clans of the Shammar. There was good pasturage.

It rained until nearly morning. Our way led through the midst of innumerable herds of grazing camels. They came towards us from all directions and, forming into two long lines, stood eyeing us curiously, swaying their long necks and growling quietly with dropped lower lips. The weaned foals would lick our camels, romp about them, and run after them. Their mothers had ceased to give them any attention; the breeding period had begun, when the parent no longer cares about the young she has been nursing for twelve months. Here and there could be

seen a female camel with a foal but a few days old. The movements of the baby camels were clumsy, and when one of them stumbled its mother would lick it and lament over it pitifully. Occasionally a male would come charging towards us from a distance, the thick foam dripping from his nostrils, and herdsmen would have to chase him away. Whenever we viewed them from an elevation, the herds looked as if they were swimming in a sea, an illusion caused by the fog which covered the depressions and enveloped the camels up to their humps and heads. Since the movements of their feet were not visible, the fog, as it shifted, appeared to carry the whole herd along with it and whenever it lifted somewhat the herd would vanish as if it had fallen into the sea, only to reappear a while later much farther off.

Our camels walked with long strides toward the south. The dark volcano of Amud towered to the southwest (Fig. 34). It seemed as if the individual heights were approaching us instead of our approaching them. Said Nazel: "O Chief, all that lies before the camel rider is near; and all that lies behind him is far."

In the afternoon I discerned through the binoculars to the southeast two camel riders standing upon a height and scanning the region. Not being sure whether or not they were scouts of a robbing band, we sent our companions through a depression with the camels, while Nazel and I kept watch on the riders. In a few minutes they disappeared toward the southwest. We continued our journey through the swales until we made camp for the night in a small hollow, where we found a huge growth of perennials into which our camels nearly disappeared. We neither built a fire nor pitched the tent, in order not to be observed by the unknown riders.

We had a terrific thunderstorm in the night, so that sleep was out of the question.

In the morning Nazel fainted and would have fallen off his camel if I had not caught him. We laid him on the ground and rubbed him until he regained consciousness, but he was very weak. I had tea brewed for him and tried to find out the cause of his collapse. He told me that he was subject to cramps in the stomach and swooned easily. What should I do if he were taken sick or if he died? I wondered. When he first came to me he was very feeble, but he had regained much of his strength since then. I gave him medicine and made up my mind to shorten the day's march that he might have a good sleep that night.

In the south numerous tents began to appear and we started toward them. On the way two men and a woman of the despised Hawazem tribe joined us.

In the afternoon we encamped upon a low height amid pools in which many camels of the migrating Hwetat were wading. I laid Nazel in my tent where he soon fell asleep and woke up toward evening much refreshed.

That evening the chief Awde came to visit me but he did not stay long for an alarm cry startled him. He mounted his mare and went away singing in a high voice:

> "Behold the blades of the decorated spears,
> Like red garments shining in the air!
> Before your eyes, O tender maid,
> Who in seductive dress appears!"

Close to the herds an enemy band, supposedly of the Shammar, appeared and had to be scared away.

The young man from Jowf who used to prepare coffee

for Prince Nuri and was now returning home in our company, walked the first day. The second day Nazel took pity on him and let him ride on his camel, the cook settling himself comfortably behind the saddle. The third day he seated himself nonchalantly in the saddle and told Nazel either to walk or to climb upon one of my camels. After Nazel was taken sick, we laid him upon a camel between two knapsacks. When he recovered, however, he wanted to ride his own camel again, but the cook informed him insolently that when he was with the Prince he used to ride this camel and that he should ride it to Jowf. His relatives, who detested the Shammar tribe, joined him in treating Nazel's camel as if it were theirs. I did not want to mix myself up in the controversy but when the negro Abdallah began to spread the lie that the camel belonged to the cook and not to Nazel, I rode into the midst of the arguing men, made the cook get off, and warned him and his companions:

"Should you offend Nazel again by word or glance I shall not give you a drop of water or a mouthful of food and shall throw all your baggage off my camels. And you, Abdallah, remember that I am your 'uncle' during your stay with me and you are my slave; if you will keep this in mind, well and good; but should you forget the fact I shall impress it upon you painfully." From that moment Abdallah kept near us and followed me like a faithful puppy.

"May Allah increase your happiness, O Sheikh, for having saved my countenance, my honor, with the settlers of Jowf," Nazel thanked me.

We stopped for a while and let the camels graze (Fig. 35).

✦ ✦

TO THE JUBA DEPRESSION

On Monday we were on the march at sunrise. The air was very still. At first we walked over a rolling plain covered with fine gravel and in places with sand dunes. Uneys eben Bneyye invited me into his tent. When I asked him why he camped with strangers, he replied:

"It is my fate, Musa. My forefathers once owned the entire northern and eastern boundary of the Nefud. Do you know Shezhizh? Well, ask to whom the wells there belong and ask to whom belong the different watering places east of the Nefud and you will be told that they belong to Eben Bneyye. In bygone days my forefathers were more powerful than either Nuri or Nawwaf is today, but Allah has taken away our power and our property and has given them to others. I, Uneys, had as a neighbor a Suleymani, of the tribe of the Weld Sleyman. He had been camping with me for years. Seven years ago our tents were below Damascus. What was to come about between us happened—I killed my neighbor. Then with my relatives I fled from the avenger to the inner desert to find refuge with Eben Rmal in the center of the Nefud. On the way we were attacked by the Zefir and robbed of all our camels, so that we came to Eben Rmal without tents, without herds, without provisions. He gave us shelter and food. I should like to have returned to my own country but the avenger demanded fifty camels, a mare, and equipment as recompense for the spilled blood. Whence was I to get them? Allah moved the hearts of Nuri and my co-tribesmen and they promised aid. I returned to Nuri two months ago. He gave me twenty-five camels; from other Rwala I have solicited twenty-five more, a mare, and equipment. I

have satisfied the avenger. Now I ride with a few camels to fetch my relatives."

To the northwest the volcanic region loomed over the horizon, appearing from afar like a lofty, dark blue wall, while in front of it, nearer us, were separate black clusters of volcanoes enveloped in a thin vapor which made them seem immense and mobile. Said Nazel: "A mirage beguileth us."

We were going through the region which is favored by Shammar when they travel to Syria. Watering their camels at the wells of Swer, they circle Jowf to the north, drink at the watering places in the depression of Sirhan, and perhaps rob the settlers at Bosra and at the western edge of the Hawran. We noted tracks of two raiding bands. Nazel prayed: "O Allah, cast a veil upon them and cast it upon us too!"

After noon the scenery of the desert changed. Far to the south in what appeared once to have been a high escarpment there gaped innumerable rifts, caves, clefts, and gorges, dividing the escarpment into larger and smaller pillars, cones, pyramids, bowlders, and domes. In front of the escarpment two domes seemed to stand, with a mound of black stone upon each of them; the space between them looked like a gate. Nazel called this the Little Gate of Raiders and declared:

"I have passed through it, Musa, at least a hundred times at the head of troops."

Our camels grazed and we ate supper near the Little Gate. Then, lying flat on my stomach on a rocky dome, with my binoculars I scanned the landscape for smoke or raiders. After supper we rode until late in the evening, when we made ready for the night near two solitary pillars. Nobody was permitted to talk or smoke on the

way for fear the sound, the odor of smoke, or the glow of a burning pipe or cigarette might draw attention to us. We hid the camels and the baggage among the bowlders so effectively that they could not be seen from a distance of ten yards and Nazel prayed: "O Allah, envelop us in Thy veil!" and we repeated his words in our minds.

During the march in the morning Abdallah told us how the chief Abdallah eben Menfes, wanting to entertain Nuri, had said to him:

"I seek to entertain you as my guest. What shall I slaughter for you? A sheep? You deserve something more valuable. A camel? It is not worthy of your greatness. What then? Behold, I have a son. I will kill him for you and yet even this will not equal your highness."

Soon afterwards we arrived on the fringe of the basin in which lies the oasis of Jowf. To the right, to the left, and behind us we saw a boundless plain with scattered bowlders, large and small, gnawed by erosion; ahead of us rose thousands of solitary tabular hills bathed in a rosy, flickering light, the darker spots a glimmering violet. From all the angles upon which the sunbeams broke, sparks seemed to spurt, so that the whole tract seethed with a red hot glow as of melted iron. I could have gazed a long time but the camels would not wait. The road was very steep and many a camel lost its load. We ran leaping to help the beasts and to calm the panic-stricken. Later we reloaded.

IN JOWF FOR THE LAST TIME

In the afternoon we sighted Jowf (Figs. 36, 37). Far off, beyond the arid, gray plain, almost on the southern bor-

der of the basin, appeared the dark green of plentiful date palms, in welcome contrast to the bare rosy slopes over which we were toiling. Among the palms the high yellow walls and towers of the settlement gleamed in the sunshine. Looming above the walls and palms was the main tower of the Mared surmounted by four smaller but substantial towers (Fig. 38).

Soon afterward we came to the dilapidated habitations of Âl Hseyn and Âl Hasan—sacrifices to the relentless fights from January 1909 to July 1910. Soon we came to the Mared fort. The wide wooden gate swung open before us; we drove the camels into the space enclosed on the north, east and south by high buildings and on the west by a high wall; here we were at last in the courtyard of the Mared! (Fig. 39.)

I hastened to look for Amer, Nawwaf's regent, and finally found him in a large room that had no windows, sipping his coffee by the western wall, near a corner in which he could not be shot from the door. After greeting me, he seated himself in the foremost place and awaited my interrogations. I handed him the message from Nawwaf and then directed him to show me all the inscriptions there were in Jowf in languages that the people did not understand. He answered that while deepening the well in the Mared tower they had found a number of marble slabs bearing strange inscriptions, but that nobody seemed to know what had become of them. He also told me that in a street near the Mared there was set in the wall a stone with strange writing. I told him that I was going to look at the stone and that meanwhile he must see to it that those marble slabs were found. On squeeze paper, with a brush and water, I made an impression of the Nabatæan inscriptions on the stone in the wall

and then, as there was no wind in the narrow street, I let the paper dry on the stone and returned to the courtyard. Amer sat there on the high steps laboriously reading Nawwaf's orders to about two hundred listeners.

As soon as the inhabitants of Jowf who were present saw me, they began to cheer and to wish me success in the negotiations with Eben Rashid. They all longed for peace.

"O Chief," they pleaded, "deliver us from this prison! We have not dared show ourselves beyond our fortification walls for five years. Our enemies prowl after us day and night. Our herds have perished, our trade has ceased, we live only on dates and on those cereal grains that we raise in our own gardens."

They brought me but two fragments of legible Nabatæan writings. Although I had promised a Turkish pound ($4.50) for every complete inscription they could find, I secured only these two. Either they had taken the other writings to Syria or they had walled them up in the Mared, the flanking towers of which had been undergoing repairs.

Meantime Amer had donned his best holiday clothes and with the elders of Jowf was ready to welcome me formally in the name of his master, Nawwaf. Toward evening I went with him to the Farha tower and questioned him about the route I should take. Learning from Nazel that two Shammar were imprisoned in Jowf I asked Amer to release them. He did so immediately upon our return, bringing them before me and directing them to thank me for their liberation. As they were clad only in ragged shirts, I bought them new shirts, kerchiefs, and mantles and asked them to bear greetings from me to their chiefs. One of them belonged to the Nebhan clan,

Fig. 39

The courtyard of Nawwaf's blockhouse, Jowf

the other to the Zmeyl. Uneys eben Bneyye wanted to know when and in which direction I was going; but I gave him no definite reply in order that any possible ambush by robbers might be thwarted by their lack of information. My tent was pitched inside the courtyard. A slave recited the following in my honor:

"I begin my every purpose by remembering Allah,
The good Lord Who knows all things, yea, even the hidden.
A bay she-camel not five years old you ride!
A thoroughbred, fleet, of the Shararat riding herds—
None has yet offered a hundred camels for her.
She has never knelt for a load; she is well cared for;
She grazes in time of plenty on the edge of the Nejd,
She eats the healthful blossoms, the tender roses;
She carries a saddle with finest cushion where rests
The foot; her pied ribbons are of purest silk.
Out from the tent she rode with the latest news
Of the chief who burdens himself with heavy loads,
From the tent of Abu Nawwaf, wolf of a picked troop,
Shield of those gathered there; whose booty is alms.
Astride her a hero, fearless of vast deserts,
Who goes to carry word to distant lands.
And, if ever you reach those countries afar,
With glad tidings begin and our greetings add.
Say: 'From you a hunting falcon came,
Ardent as the star Canopus, which cannot be hidden.
Countries, settled and desert, he explored
With mind acute, nor of distress afraid.
Chief Musa, of whom only glad tidings
There are, over ancient events holds sway.
No chaste beauty ever gave birth to another
Like unto him—no Bedouin chief his peer.
A ruler he, a vizier, all things knowing,
Alone his equal the fabled Abu Zeyd.
What fair examples gives his generous hand,

Like one who spends nor ever fears the losses.
With smiling mouth, of will indomitable,
He excels all consuls, advises in difficult cases.
A reckless lion, with only contempt for rascals;
The oppressed crave his stout armor for themselves.
If the Lord helps and if his aim succeeds
He will return with important tidings to you,
Of Bedouins and settlers, of sheep and goat-breeding nomads,
Of the land of the Rwala and Fedan and the Amarat land,
Of the regions of Nejd and also of valleys vast,
Of the Sawwan country and of the land of the Hwetat.
By these deeds he has gained for himself a treasure
Of fame, a sea of knowledge, and noble traits.' "

On Wednesday, January 13, we rose early. The courtyard was crowded with sick and wounded in need of advice and medicines. After finishing with them I went with Amer into the main Mared tower. It is entered through a narrow aperture that can be closed by a heavy door sheathed with iron. A still smaller aperture leads into a meager hallway by which one may enter Nawwaf's apartment, where were stored enough arms, ammunition, and provisions to enable him to withstand a long siege. Keys to open the door leading to the hallway were kept only by Amer and Nawwaf's mother, who was his caretaker. He did not trust his wife, a native of Jowf. The mother greeted me cordially, led me through the house, displayed the two goats that lived with her in the tower, and showed me how she could draw water straight from a well of fresh spring water lined with stone and dug under the tower. From Nawwaf's room, which was stuffy and damp because the old, thick, stone walls constantly perspired, we went up the spiral staircase to the top of the tower

which was enclosed by a low wall, perforated on all sides with loop-holes for guns. The fortress had suffered much in the last combats. The four smaller flanking towers had been reërected by Nawwaf, but were made of adobe, while the original walls are of hard stones.

Later we climbed the towers of Freyha and Farha to sketch a map of Jowf.

As I looked over this country for the last time, I gathered the details into my memory. I was leaving behind me forever old paths and old friends to penetrate yet deeper into the desert upon new paths and new adventures, and what the outcome of these might be, only Allah knew.

THE END

Lava-covered desert
Sandy desert
Town
Village
Ruins
Well
Spring
Rainpool
Mountain
Route, Nov. 17, 1908 – June 21, 1909
Route, Dec. 3, 1914 – Jan. 12, 1915
ROUTE MAP ILLUSTRATING
"IN THE ARABIAN DESERT"
BY ALOIS MUSIL
Horace Liveright, Publisher, New York, 1930
0 10 20 40 60 80 100 MILES
0 10 20 40 60 80 100 KILOMETERS
38
40
42
44
36
34
32
ABU RUMEN
BISHRI
Kreta
Miyadhin
Tudmor (Palmyra)
RAWAK
MANAZER
Warka
Tayyariyye
Swab
SERIYYAT
Eleyyaniyye
Khan at-Trab
Dmeyr
Khabari Seykal
Sab Biyar
Damascus
IYATH
DERAA
Jweyf
BWEYB
HAMAD
KAARA
Mlosi
AFAYEF
NASER
Wadi Hawran
Euphrates River
MESOPOTAMIA
Hit
Lmat
HAWRAN
Minkat
Kerbela
Shethatha
Wadi Tbel
ENAZA
Chaachedi
Said
Jhayde
DHEMBUH
LAHA
Pweyze
Hallabat
Hammam as-Sarrah
KHARJA
DMEYTHAT
Kasr al-Azrak
UMM WUAL
Nejef

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